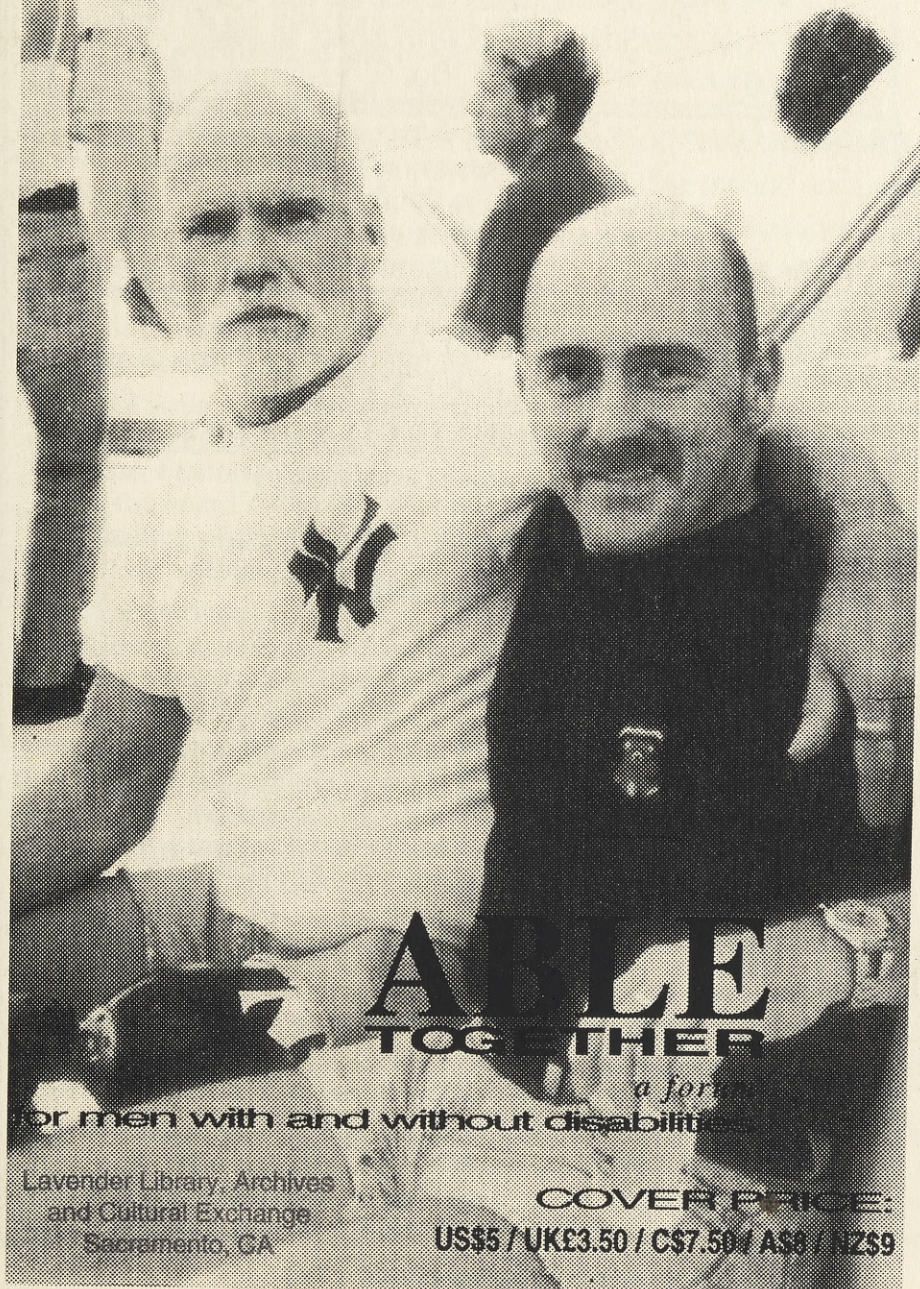


ABLE-TOGETHER

WINTER 1999, Volume 6, Number 1

Magazine



ABLE TOGETHER

a forum

for men with and without disabilities

Lavender Library, Archives
and Cultural Exchange
Sacramento, CA

COVER PRICE:

US\$5 / UK£3.50 / C\$7.50 / A\$8 / NZ\$9

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Two ABLE-TOGETHER yellow flyers are stapled into this issue of the magazine: please pull them out and keep to pass on to someone who might like to know about A-T!

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for gay/bisexual men with physical disabilities
evening meetings weekly at
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Cover photograph: see featured interview, pages 8 - 13

UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY

The board of *ABLE-TOGETHER, Inc.* held its quarterly meeting on November 15th.

At the corporation's 1998 annual meeting on December 13th the directors retired, and were duly renominated and re-elected.

Fundraising was discussed at both meetings. A-T staff and board members showed their support for the organization to the tune of over \$1000-worth of donations, pledges and subscriptions to A-T Magazine. Discussions are ongoing with the board of Axis Dance Company for a possible concert/performance fundraising event to benefit both organizations.

The Fall issue of A-T Magazine reached subscribers up to one month after mailing from San Francisco, an unacceptable delay: the board's response is to suspend bulk mailing of the Magazine—the Winter 1999 issue will be sent by first class mail.

Initial activity on A-T Online's new email-list discussion group, *Disgaytalk* has been encouraging and useful feedback has been obtained from list members. The intention remains to find a "host/moderator" to run the group on a long-term basis—and to continue to find ways to improve the mechanics of *Disgaytalk* so as to afford lively and safe discussion.

The board heard reports on the successful Fall A-T "Sunday Brunches" and approved a schedule of ten "Cafe A-T" meetings for 1999 (pp. 31-4). The venue for the Fall meetings having been sold, an excellent new location has been identified.

The developing Buddy Program will continue to be offered on a "request" basis to disabled men wanting to meet someone with a similar disability. —Mike Maurillo

ABLE TOGETHER

WINTER 1999, Volume 6, Number 1

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A-T MAGAZINE

is published by
ABLE-TOGETHER, Inc.,
a California public benefit
corporation exempt from
federal taxes under
Section 501 (c) 3

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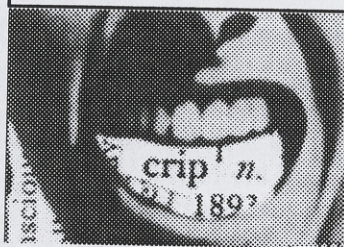
HIS FACE, we are told, was covered with dried blood—with the exception of two streaks where his tears had washed it clean.

We don't expect to find the word "tears" in a coroner's report, yet there it was, an inescapable part of the official report that described the torture and murder of Matthew Shepard.

By now, every gay man in America knows the gruesome details of that murder, details that fill us with revulsion at the act, compassion for its victim, and fear for ourselves. Even now, after the passage of months, why do so many of us feel compelled to revisit the events of October 7th, when a passerby found what he thought was a scarecrow lashed to a fence on the wide-open prairie of all-American Laramie, Wyoming? Why does our collective consciousness hang on to that image with such tenacity?

Here in San Francisco, at Harvey Milk Plaza in the Castro, we fly a huge rainbow flag—the size of one of those American flags you think should be a symbol of patriotism but instead turn out to be advertise-

ABLE TOGETHER



from the
EDITOR

ments for automobile dealers, the new patriotism of consumerism. Unlike those flags, ours is the real thing. It advertises nothing but pride and a striving for connection with one another—these days pride and community under siege.

In the days immediately after Matthew Shepard's murder, when that big flag flew at half staff, I wandered down to the intersection of Castro and 18th streets, our spot for makeshift sidewalk memorials. I found the usual flowers, photos, and poems, the calls to action, the condemnations of the hatemongers. I found no explanation for why I had lost part of my self.

When I began talking to friends I found that others were struggling with the same feelings. Together we tried to find explanations. Gay bashings and even gay murders are far too frequent in our cultural landscape for the very fact of *this* murder to have made so deep an impact, we agreed.

Was it the unspeakable brutality of this particular killing that made such a difference? But the murder of Matthew Shepard was no more

brutal than the murder of James Byrd, the African-American man chained to a pickup and dragged behind it until his head was ripped from his body. In our era of compartmentalized allegiances and the breakdown of solidarity among groups that might be presumed to share common goals, we admitted to one another shamefully that yes, James Byrd's murder probably meant less to us because he was not one of "ours." Still, this explanation was insufficient. Could it be that Matthew Shepard's murder was weighted with symbolism too obvious to dismiss? Lashed to that fence with arms outstretched he was, after all, *crucified*, martyr to a cause we fear will summon more and more blood

Tired of analyzing public and political significance, one friend turned to a more intimate meaning. "Look," he said, "I know that people will misunderstand and maybe even find what I'm thinking offensive, but I believe there's a kind of erotic feeling involved, too. Matthew Shepard was young and attractive and vulnerable-looking, the kind of guy many of us seek to love and protect. His loss has to have meaning on that level. We're being told that who we love, who we *are*, is trash.

MATTHEW SHEPARD'S LIFE AND DEATH BEAR A SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR DISABLED GAY MEN.

I did not find my friend's explanation offensive; I'd had similar feelings myself. What's more, the word "vulnerable" made me understand why the Wyoming obscenity bears special meaning for disabled gay men. Matthew Shepard stood 5'2" tall and weighed about

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Scene and herd at A-T's
October 25th Sunday
Brunch

100 pounds. His birth had been premature and in their statement to the press his parents spoke of how he had battled health problems all his life. In present-day American culture, any man so small and so delicate will have his masculinity—his very human autonomy—questioned as a matter of course, from the time of his first social interactions. Seen from this perspective, it seems obvious to me that Matthew Shepard was...disabled.

I DO NOT MEAN TO CLAIM HIM AS one of our own through special pleading or some semantic shell game. I mean only to suggest that Matthew Shepard's life and death show us once again how inconsequential are the lines that separate "disabled" from "nondisabled"—or even gay from straight. Our places on the continuum of human identity can shift, sometimes with a nearly inaudible whisper, at other times with a shout. We need to step lively if we're to remain fully human. We might not dance every dance, but learning to appreciate the choreography is one way to practice loving one another.

Who we are and where we stand was expressed with great good humor at a recent A-T board meeting when one man questioned his own participation in a certain event by pointing out that he is disabled but not gay. "So I guess I'm not

really a member of the *population*," he mused. "Maybe," responded board President Blaine Waterman with a mischievous grin, "but remember, it only takes one slip to *join* the population!"


In the meantime, whatever particular minority self-definition we choose, we struggle to maintain our self-respect in the face of stares and slurs—we struggle to stay alive under a hail of sticks and stones. Chris Hewitt's first-person account in this issue is called just that, "Sticks and Stones" (p. 14). In it, Chris, a man with an attention-grabbing disability, recounts some of the things people have said to him, done to him, and tried to do *for* him. No matter how appalling the events turn out to be, Chris finds humor in them, burnishes that humor until it gleams, then offers it for our consideration.

He does this so well because his knack for survival incorporates respect for the power of language. He knows, too, that language can serve destructive ends just as powerfully. When Chris and I worked together on editing his piece and talked about the name-calling he's endured we could not avoid thinking of Matthew Shepard. "That's where it starts, doesn't it," said Chris, and I knew just what he meant. There is scant distance, we have learned, between naming

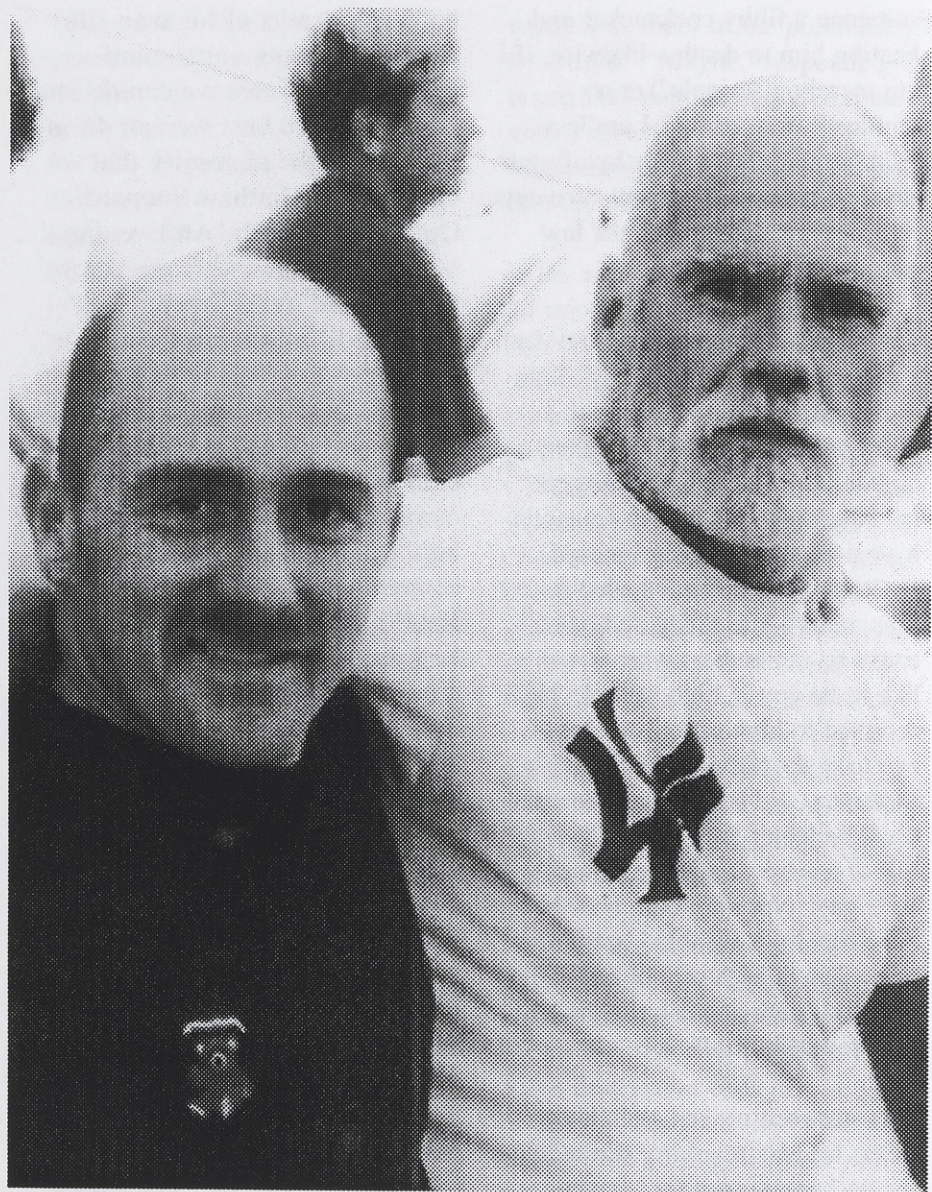
someone a filthy cocksucker and beating him to death—likewise, if I am merely a “cripple,” or a “midget” or a “gimp,” I am less than human, thus unworthy of your love, no matter how many curb cuts or accessible bathrooms the law guarantees me.

SEE ME! RESPECT ME! LOVE ME! I am disabled. I am gay. I am a man like you however much I seem unlike you. Ed Gallagher, author of “How to Kill A Faggot” (p. 20), knows that those demands have a history of being ignored. He knows it because of what he sees around him today and because he remembers what it was like to be gay in high school. He returned to high school not long ago to make those same demands in person. Ed had the guts to sit in his wheelchair in front of a room full of teachers and to tell them that he is gay. Not only that, he told them that he is disabled because being gay in high school had filled him with such anguish that he had tried to kill himself.

Ed’s account makes one thing clear: he was teaching the teachers by bearing witness to the

hard-won truths of his own life. Bearing witness—again and again—is the least we can do and sometimes the best we can do in the face of the obscenity that slaughtered Matthew Shepard. On November 4th “An Evening of Lamentation and Hope” drew hundreds of us to Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco. I went in the company of three friends, each of us unaccustomed to finding himself in church. Later we admitted to one another that we had been hoping for ritual and catharsis, something to transcend our personal pain, something that might help us to understand what had happened. Instead, we felt let down, discouraged. Not until writing these words, in fact, did I realize the significance of being at Grace Cathedral that night. Our being there was insufficient, but it was a beginning. It was, perhaps, the only way we could begin to find our way along the hard road to bearing witness in a way that needs to become more outspoken, more courageous and more steadfast as we fight to be ourselves—which means fighting for our lives.  —Bob Guter

IN MEMORIAM
MATTHEW SHEPARD
1977-1998



Mark and Joseph: Two happy sailors in Key West, Florida

JOSEPH and MARK AN A-T Love STORY

I MET JOSEPH AND MARK at A-T's first San Francisco Sunday Brunch on September 20th (see p. 26). Returning to New York City from a vacation in Hawaii, they were tanned and relaxed, happy to be in San Francisco, and eager to tell me about how they met and what's happened to them since then. —*Bob Guter*

BOB After getting to know you two just a bit, the first thing that strikes me is all the differences between you. Joseph, your disability is recent-onset, you are HIV-positive, and you're a New Yorker of a generation that responds differently to gayness than Mark's generation does. Mark, your disability, by contrast, is early onset, you grew up in small-town surroundings in England, and you had enough qualms about your own gayness to marry and father a child at an early age. But all of these differences don't seem to be getting in your way.

MARK Well they don't, do they? Some odd things unite us. For example, Joseph copes well with his HIV with the help of medication. I had a heart attack a few years ago, so I'm dependent on medication too.

BOB You two fell for one another right away. Did your disabilities contributed to that, or did the attraction transcend dis-

ability? Or encompass it?

MARK I don't see Joseph as being disabled. I look at him and he looks like anybody else. The only way he's different is when he has trouble walking somewhere.

JOSEPH Yeah, well don't forget the pain. I'm in a lot of pain because of the amputation. We do snipe at one another about some things. I don't like it when he takes his hearing aids out.

MARK But you take your leg off to be more comfortable. It's no different.

JOSEPH I only take my leg off at night.

MARK That's not true. Sometimes when your stump hurts you ...

BOB Well, I see what you mean by the sniping [*general laughter*]. But tell me about how you met.

JOSEPH We both had ads in A-T. My amputation was new. It was brought on by my HIV status.

I wanted to meet other amputees, so Mark's ad didn't catch my eye.

MARK Joseph's sounded really attractive to me though, so I answered his ad. The peculiar thing is that our letters crossed in the mail, so on my first trip to New York I had no way to find him.

BOB But you persisted.

MARK I did. I made another trip two months later.

JOSEPH He came to visit that time. I met him at the front door in my wheelchair. My amputation was so recent I was not getting around well yet. My apartment wasn't air conditioned and I was sitting there without a shirt on. When Mark walked in I thought, Oh what a gorgeous little man. He looked fabulous. I figured he'd have no interest in me. But I said to him, your ad said you're hairy. Take off your shirt.

MARK He's brazen.

JOSEPH What did I have to lose? He took off his shirt and he looked fabulous, hairy and muscular. I'd hopped out of my chair and onto the couch. He came over and kind of sat in my lap. The next thing I knew his tongue was in my mouth. We went to bed and had great sex.

MARK Joseph wanted to go out to eat, so we did and then I talked him into letting me spend the night. His apartment was an oven, so we didn't get much sleep. Next night we ended up in my air

conditioned hotel . . .

JOSEPH And we fucked all night, didn't we?

That's when I first realized we couldn't talk in bed, because Mark had taken out his hearing aids and I learned that he didn't know sign language. I felt frustrated by that.

BOB Mark, is there as big a schism in England as here in the States between the signing and non-signing deaf?

MARK Oh, yes! There are organizations for deaf who are gay, but I found that I was unwelcome because I don't sign. You see, I lost my hearing at an age when my speech was fully developed, and with the hearing aids and lip reading I was able to go to regular school. Since I can manage pretty well in the hearing world, there was no need for me to learn signing.

BOB That's one more example of why it's so difficult to generalize about disability. Here you are, a deaf man, and we're already talking about the great divide between different deaf communities. I feel a strong responsibility to give men with different experiences of disability a voice here, but at the same time to recognize what all of us share. It's not so easy. Here I am, for example, with a mobility disability—I don't find I have a lot in common with men who have cognitive disabilities, say.

MARK Yes. And with your disability it's a visible disability; with deafness it's hidden. Often I'm mistaken for being stupid if I have to ask someone to repeat something two or three times. Sometimes people will just walk away, ignore you.

JOSEPH In gay bars people walk away from him when they realize he's deaf.

MARK In bars there's the noise level, it makes my hearing aids almost useless. And bars are dimly lit, so I can't read lips.

JOSEPH I've had to learn to keep my mustache trimmed so that Mark can read my lips.

BOB Mark, when you were growing up in England, did you make any attempt to investigate gay life?

MARK Only when I could get away to London.

JOSEPH Remember, he lived in a small town where everybody knew him. There was one guy in town that everybody called Neil the Faggot.

MARK Yeah. He was pretty open about his sexuality, but he paid for it. People would say, "Oh look, there goes Neil the Faggot." And he'd get beat up sometimes, too. I think that one of the reasons I ended up marrying was because I felt excluded from so much, what with being gay and deaf.

BOB Joseph, what was growing up like for you.

JOSEPH I was 28 before I told my parents and still living at home. My mother was a devout Roman Catholic. She wouldn't talk to me for a month. She'd cook me breakfast, wait on me, but not talk. After that she became overprotective. She got my siblings to look out for me too (there were five brothers and sisters and my twin brother and I were the oldest). I think she was afraid for me, afraid of what might happen to me. I made her unhappy all over again when I stopped going to church.. I was still in the closet at work, though.

BOB Were you meeting men, having sex?

JOSEPH Oh, I was having sex by the time I was fifteen. But I felt so guilty about it I went away to college in Kansas to get away from gay life in New York.

BOB Kansas! That's a pretty radical move.

MARK He changed his name to Dorothy!

BOB What happened in Kansas?

JOSEPH Nothing. I had my Best Friend, my right hand. Then I went back to New York and I got a job in social work, working with children in group homes for about a year and a half. Then I traveled all over the country as a publisher's sales rep. And after that I worked at Bloomingdale's. Finally, I started working for the City of New

York. I was secretary to a City Commissioner. I worked for the City for 20 years. I was still working there when I got sick and had to take disability.

BOB Mark, did you notice that we grinned when Joseph mentioned "Bloomingdale's?" I think that's because the NYC store had a reputation for being staffed by a lot of gay men! True, Joseph?

JOSEPH Oh, sure. I had a ponytail when I worked there. I sold ties, scarves, underwear . . .

BOB And all the best-looking guys came in to buy underwear from you, right?

JOSEPH That's right, they did! I'd get cruised, I'd get phone numbers slipped into my pocket, all kinds of things.

BOB That's just another indication of how your lives as gay men were so different. Mark, you had very little experience, and then we've got this bloke, here, Mr. Popularity, it seems . . .

JOSEPH Well, I lived near the Mine Shaft. It was a neighborhood bar for me.

BOB A notorious place!

JOSEPH A *fabulous* place!

BOB Does hearing about all of this freedom and sexual experience make you regret any of your own life, Mark?

MARK No, I don't think so. The only things I regret about my life are the times I've been stupid.

BOB Are you planning to set up housekeeping together when Mark's immigration stuff is finally settled?

JOSEPH Oh, we're living together already.

MARK I sold my house in England, really burnt my bridges behind me. I had a good job with a firm that does electrical work and I quit that, too.

JOSEPH He's moved into my apartment. We've decorated it. We each have a collection of masks from different countries and we've combined them . . .

BOB Sounds like a cozy nest.

JOSEPH It is. It's tiny, of course. It's New York. But we have lots of light. There's a deck. And I have two birds. Cockatiels. Having Mark around has been great for me because he can do anything. He can fix or build anything we need. He cooks, too.

BOB If either of you were giving advice to someone intent on finding a partner, someone thinking of putting an ad in A-T, or maybe someone who'd done so already without much success—what would you tell them?

JOSEPH Be honest about everything, describe your disability. But you know, I think A-T does a disservice to disabled men when you edit out things in ads that people want to know. Sexual preferences. When you advertise in

something like *Drummer* or *Bear* or *Leather Journal* you can say explicitly what you're into and they'll print it. I can put an ad in those places but there's not much chance that I'll get an answer, since I'm an amputee. A-T is the best chance for men like me, so I resent that you edit ads.

BOB You've brought up an important point. Our policy has always been—and it's stated forthrightly in the ads instruction section—that to print too much explicit or fetishistic material will make readers who are thinking of responding feel depersonalized. We think A-T is about people connections first.

JOSEPH Sure. That's fine. But what about sex? I think that-disabled people don't get enough sex to begin with.

BOB Do you believe that you would have gotten more replies if we had printed your ad precisely as you'd written it, with no cuts?

JOSEPH Yes!

BOB Aren't there other things, though, that might be more important? Joseph, you've confessed that you would not have answered Mark's ad, because you were looking for a fellow amputee.

JOSEPH The thing is, I'd met attractive deaf men before, but things never went anywhere, since we couldn't communicate. I was reluctant to meet Mark because I thought he couldn't speak. But he


was persistent. I was ready with pencil and paper when we met and I wasn't expecting very much out of the encounter..

BOB You're proving my point! It depends on the man, not just the disability or particular sexual preference. Mark answered *your* ad, even though you thought you wouldn't be interested—and here you are today!. Doesn't this suggest that overly explicit ads may move people away from potential partners? How about you, Mark, do you agree with Joseph about explicit ads?

MARK I think I do. You may be disabled, but you still have sexual preferences, don't you? One of the reasons I wrote to Joseph was because he described himself as hairy like a bear, and I'm turned on to hairy men.

BOB I guess the important fact is that you did meet one another, despite some remarkable odds against it. What now? What do you want out of life next?

JOSEPH To take things as they come. We are still very much in love with one another and we're looking forward to spending our first Christmas together. What I want more than anything is just to be happy. Mark makes me happy.

MARK I don't think that's asking too much, do you? 



Chris Hewitt

Photograph by Barbara E. Loudis

STICKS *and* STONES

Chris Hewitt's

poems and translations have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Advocate*, and *The James White Review*. He is senior literary editor of *A & U Magazine*. *Sticks and Stones* is excerpted from Chris's forthcoming memoir, *Brittle Bones*.

*Sticks and stones
May break my bones,
But names will
Never hurt me.*

Childrens' Rhyme

IF you're in a wheelchair, non-disabled people seem to feel they can come up to you on the street, in the park, on a bus—just about anywhere—and comment about your appearance. It's as if the 'chair turns the person in it into an invulnerable, insensitive object with no feelings, no reactive human qualities.

SEVERAL times in movie theatres ushers have said, "You can't park in the aisle. You're a fire hazard!" Whenever I'm assaulted like this I am shocked, amused and angered all at once. I think of a witty riposte minutes, hours, or even days later. I might have told the usher, "Well,

I may be a flaming queen, but I'm not about to burn the house down!" Of course, anyone who makes an insensitive remark in the first place is unlikely to get the joke.

HERE in San Francisco I've been the recipient of more rude and obnoxious comments from straight than from gay people. Maybe gay people identify more with someone who represents another kind of minority. On the other hand, I've been harassed most by African American school kids and teenagers. One black kid of about fifteen came up to me on Castro Street and said, "Do me a favor, willya?" "Sure," I replied. "Next Christmas tell Santa I want a new bike." I couldn't make sense of this at first. Later I realized he was addressing me as if I were one of Santa's elves.

MY VERY APPEARANCE on the sidewalk in Manhattan several times reduced a group of black schoolchildren to fits of hysterical, falling-down laughter. They giggled convulsively, pointed and called out, "Look at the midget! Look at the midget! That's the funniest thing I ever saw!" I am not, strictly speaking, a dwarf or a midget. Both words have negative connotations for me and probably for the reader. Both imply freak shows and circuses. They suggest that small people are cute little clowns. Again, I wish I could think of appropriate replies when I'm accosted in this way. I'd like the kids to learn who and what I am, but on a noisy city street it would be hard to explain; it's unlikely they could even hear me over all their laughter and commotion. White kids, on the contrary, react timidly: They whisper among themselves and point at me. I might hear an occasional "midget" or "dwarf," but nothing more.

Adults can be equally rude. Once in a movie line in Manhattan a gold-chain-bedecked young man turned to his girlfriend and announced, "I don't wanna go ta this movie theatre—it's crawlin' with

midgets!" If I had the muscles of a wheelchair basketball player instead of brittle bones I might have answered, "That's right, Motherfucker. We midgets are taking over the world and our latest plan is to exterminate big-mouthed assholes like you!" I didn't of course, since I can't afford a broken jaw. Usually I just think to myself, *Wait till my friends hear this one.*

As if to prove that rudeness is not limited to any race or social class, I'm reminded of the time a dignified-looking elderly man approached me at intermission in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. His balding gray hair and well-tailored suit projected an air of Ivy League manners—which he promptly blew by saying, "Well, you certainly got the short end of the stick, didn't you." I swallowed the urge to answer, "Shut up, baldy!"

Though I don't like being patronized or pitied, I prefer it to outright mockery or hostility. Once in Berkeley an old woman came up to me in Woolworth's and said, "Let you out of the asylum for the day, have they dear?" All I could do was to stifle a laugh and duck down a side aisle. "That's right lady," I wish I'd said, "I'll see you there later on!"

There's a related kind of patronizing that involves people talking over your head as if you're not sentient: once when I was in college in Birmingham, England and went to the post office with two friends, the woman behind the counter looked at Sue and Pete, ignoring me totally, and said, "Taking him out for an airing, are you?" as if I were a piece of laundry! We all collapsed into a heap of laughter once we got out onto the sidewalk.

Patronizing can be more than verbal; it can take the form of unwanted assistance. Once I was sitting at the foot of a flight of stairs when two guys appeared and without a word carried me to the top. When I had recovered from my amazement I said, "Excuse me, I know you meant well, but I was waiting down there for a friend. Would you mind carrying me back down now?"

I get around in a large motorized chair, about 150 pounds of hardware. Add my weight and the whole package weighs more than 200 pounds. Sometimes I've had to argue fiercely with a would-be helper. I get the feeling that some men feel their manhood offended when I say, "It's much too heavy a load for one person.

It takes three or four at least." When a guy answers, "No problem, I'm strong," I want to say, "Listen, dear, I'm sure you work out at the gym, but unless you're an Olympic weight lifter, you'll need some help." Once in a great while I'm wrong about such things. Years ago when the elevator in my apartment building broke, two very obese gentlemen insisted that they could carry me up a flight of stairs. To my surprise they easily did the job of four. They turned out to be sumo wrestlers!

One real mystery, at least to me, is what makes people associate disability with panhandling or homelessness. When I lived in Manhattan, I began to think twice about loitering on the sidewalk for a minute or two for fear of having charity forced on me. I've had coins dropped in an empty coffee cup I was holding, and in one memorable incident a *full* cup. One time a nun thrust a handful of bills at me. "The Lord wants you to have this twenty-five dollars," she asserted. For once, I came back with a reply that pleased me: "Who am I to argue with the Lord?" Since I happened to be broke at the time and Sister looked implacable, I took the money. I managed to salve my conscience later on by using some of the cash to buy

food for a man who really was homeless.

In another crazy Manhattan encounter, I was driving down Broadway minding my own business when a man approached me and said, "I'd give you a quarter, but since you're so small I'll give you a dime." A second man overheard the remark and confronted the first: "What a terrible thing to say to the poor guy. It's bad enough he's a cripple. You don't have to add insult to injury." They went on arguing fiercely, as folks do in New York, so I left them to get on with it and went about my business.

It is natural, I suppose, to be curious about me—I look very different from most folks, even from most other folks in wheelchairs. We people with osteogenesis tend to resemble one another not only in body but in facial features. We tend to have large heads, deformed and prominent chest bones, large, delicate and often quite beautiful hands.

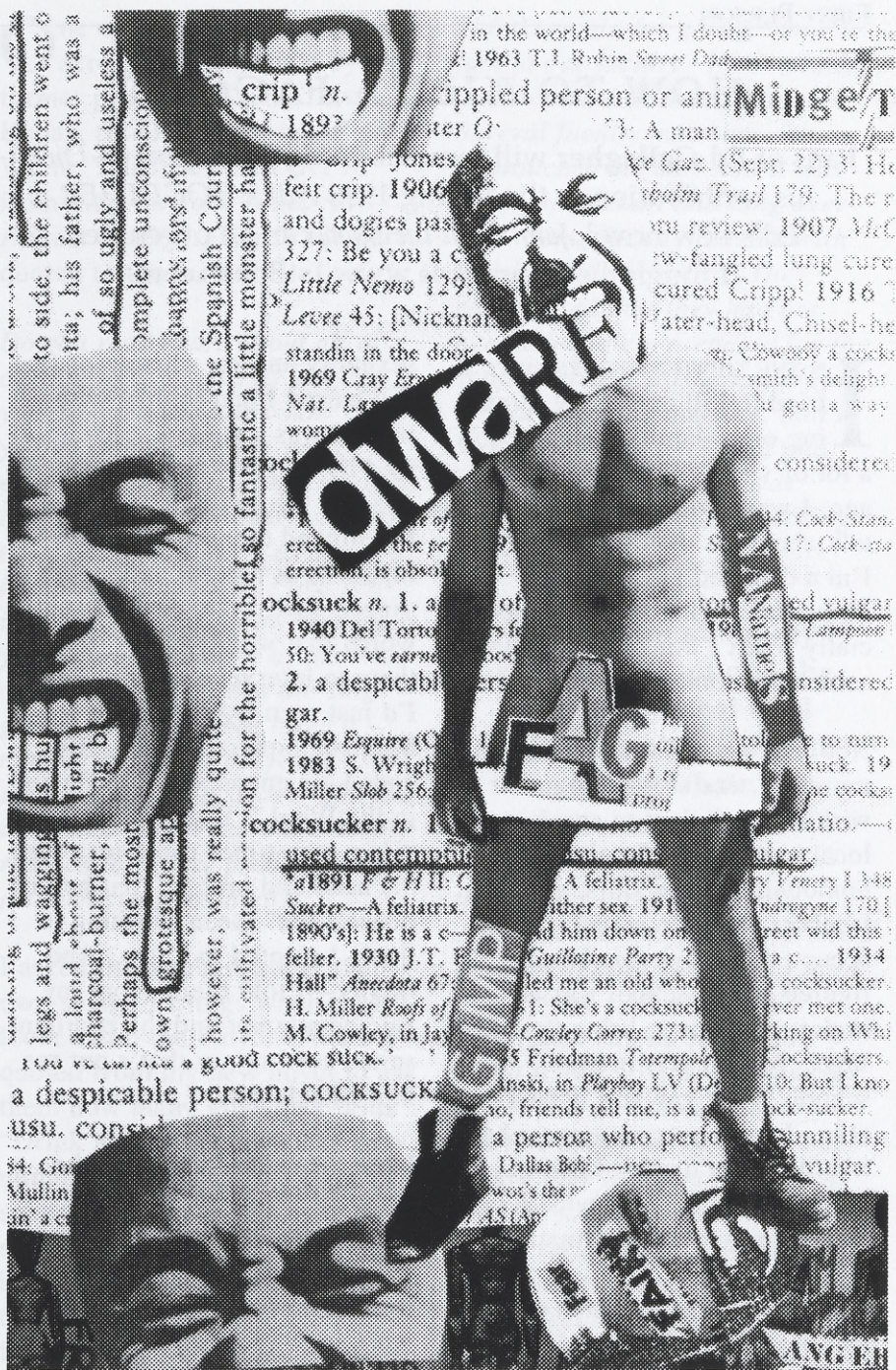
Because of this similarity in general appearance, I've often been mistaken for someone else. Years ago the movie "Ship of Fools" prompted repeated demands of "Aren't you Michael Dunn?" Lately it's been the well known and wondrously talented French

Jazz pianist Michel Petrucciani. Coming out of Carnegie Hall once, where I'd just bought tickets for a classical music concert, I was accosted by an elderly lady in a mink coat with "Oh no, I'm heart-broken! I missed you! I missed your concert!" When I explained that I was merely a relatively unknown poet, she said, "It's wonderful you're a poet. I just *love* poetry."

I wonder if anyone has ever approached Michel Petrucciani and offered, "I love your poetry." But I guess I'm just not famous enough for any reciprocal mistaken identity.

Being a public person for all the wrong reasons is pretty tiring. If I'm going to be instantly recognizable I would like to be recognized for my own accomplishments, not for someone else's. And I certainly don't want to be recognized as the Generic Cripple who gets a quarter splashed in his cup of coffee. ☞

**Chris Hewitt dedicates
Sticks and Stones
to the memory of his friend
Bill Duane.**



HOW TO KILL A FAGGOT

Fans of **Ed Gallagher** will remember *My Dictionary on Dicks*, his contribution to the Spring 1996 *ABLE-TOGETHER*.

Ed's new novel, *Johnny in the Spot*, can be purchased through the Internet at www.1stBooks.com.

IN THE THIRTEEN YEARS since I tried to kill myself by jumping off a dam I've changed in a lot of ways. Thirteen years ago, I was a kid who couldn't talk about his own sexuality, now I'm a disabled gay man who insists on talking about it, especially when I think it might do somebody some good.

Not long after Matthew Shepard's murder, I was invited, together with a gay student, to speak to a local high school faculty about homophobia, bias slurs, and how teachers should respond. I accepted the invitation because I figured a high school was an important place to bring the message. When I was in high school, being gay was unbearable. I can't even imagine what it's like to be disabled and gay in high school. A lot of what I said could apply to either situation.

I spoke to the teachers as directly and personally as I could. I told them about my own struggle with

sexuality and the climate of fear and hatred I had to deal with when I was a student, characterized by "faggot" remarks that no one had the courage to challenge. I reminded them that the word faggot is as hateful and stupid as nigger, spic, kike, or gook—all words that would surely prompt them to intervene. I told them I'd just seen Bob Dylan at Madison Square Garden. He ended his encores with "Blowin' in the Wind." Did the lyrics "How many times can a man turn his head and pretend that he just doesn't see" mean anything to them, I wanted to know. And finally—I told them about my suicide attempt and the resultant spinal cord injury that's put me in a wheelchair.

I wanted to hit them with the personal but I also wanted to remind them that my situation was far from unique, so I looked for comments in the popular press to support my position. They weren't hard to find.

One of the best things I came across was an article by gay former pro-football star David Kopay, titled "Dear Reggie White: You Just Don't Get It," from the *New York Times* of August 8, 1998. Here's the part I quoted to the faculty:

Do you really care about all of our nation's youths, as you say you do? Do you know how many youths commit suicide yearly, especially because of their sexual orientation? I seriously, at one time, thought about it as a way to escape all the loathing and self-loathing. Do you know how many youths are alcoholics or addicted to drugs? The figures are staggering. The NFL has hired a number of former players as substance abuse counselors. Do you think that maybe there are deeper reasons for abuse problems than just achieving the high?

I asked the teachers about their own sexual feelings when they looked into the mirror. And I quoted from my new novel to ask them how many guys they think "Drink and drug their dicks into numbness to avoid facing the sober sexual truths about themselves." Afterwards, I wondered if I hit them too hard with the truth. Here's the response I got from the faculty member who arranged the talk:

Thanks again for giving your talk to our faculty. It stimulated much animated discussion. Several faculty members approached me and said it was vitally important and long overdue. Some faculty reacted with considerable hostility. They complained that they had not been adequately prepared for the subject, that it was not appropriate for a faculty meeting, that it went on for too long, and that some of your language was unnecessarily blunt. Broaching

I told them about my suicide attempt and the resultant spinal cord injury that's put me in a wheelchair.

the topic, nevertheless, was essential and has had the desired effect of getting teachers to think about it, as well as to what extent they can do something about it. Of course, the younger teachers were enthusiastically positive about the meeting, and many older teachers have been too. As far as I'm concerned, it's OK to ruffle some feathers in a good cause. Some people—those whose feathers were ruffled—simply don't want to deal with any issues of substance because

MAKING LOVE TO DISABILITY

IN LAST ISSUE'S "Making Love to Ourselves"

Bob Guter posed the following questions to eight disabled men: Do you find other disabled men attractive? If so, what have you done about it? If not, why not? The answers he got were varied, stimulating, and often contradictory.

SOMETHING ABOUT the questions seems to have struck home: responses have been numerous, both letters from A-T readers and postings on Disgaytalk, A-T's online discussion group. Most of you have broadened the discussion to ask, again, why certain nondisabled men prefer certain disabled men. Here are some examples of what you've been saying.

DAN

I've had two experiences with guys who wanted to date me for "amusement." One was a doctor. He had a thing about picking me up from my wheelchair and holding me while I tried to walk. He flew all the way from the East Coast to attend a conference and to meet me, but it just freaked me out. He actually came to my home, but there was no way I was going to meet him alone, so I had my nephew and his girlfriend there. When we went into my bedroom he continued to talk about picking me up. What's up with that?

Another guy I met wanted me to fist him because of my thin hands. Well, I wasn't into it, so our relationship didn't go very far—but he didn't fly across the country, either.

OK, now that I've spilled

my guts about all that, I'll admit that I have found a lot of great men out there to date, both disabled and non-disabled. I've dated two guys with CP, one guy that was blind, one deaf guy, and one guy recovering from a brain tumor. I actively seek out guys with disabilities to date because I feel they will have more compassion for someone like me. Other disabled men have said pretty much the same thing to me. They feel it's easier to be with a man with the same disability because he will understand things better in the "present tense"—meaning he'll relate more easily because he understands the limitations.

I've dated several able-bodied men as well. I guess what I'm saying is it doesn't matter all that much to me—I love men! I just wish I was dating more often.

OWEN

A guy who says he's interested in me because of my disability seems as weird to me as the guy who weasels out of meeting me for a half-hour coffee because my 'chair freaks him out. If my disability is the source of mild anxiety or even mild titillation, I have no problem. If it's the main focus of some guy's attention, for good or ill, I get very uncomfortable.

CHRIS

Owen talks about being uncomfortable with a guy who's interested in you because you are disabled. That's OK by me, but what really gets on my nerves is when you meet up with someone and you get the impression that you are not quite "enough." It's like they really want to meet up with a disabled guy, but then you get together and they want to rush off to meet the next one. People need to see the person behind the disability.


BLAINE

I don't have a problem *theoretically* with men attracted to disability, or to my disability, but my practical experience is that I've never had so much as a good fuck out of someone in that category. Few men are attracted to "disabled guys" in general; most attractions are very specific, i.e., "below-knee amputees" or "athletic paraplegics." I don't see anything morally wrong with

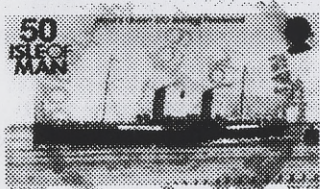
narrow fetishes, but they're hard to gratify and they leave me feeling doubly rejected when as an object I don't even have a "popular" disability

Dating a disabled guy is no magic solution, either. Several years ago I dated a cute boy with AIDS who was paralyzed by HIV's effects on his nervous system. For five months I visited him every day and stayed over many nights. JD was totally crazy but incredibly charismatic and hypnotically pretty. I used to push his wheelchair around the Castro and get him things he couldn't reach. His paralysis was not an issue for me, but his HIV was. I never lost my fear of contracting HIV from him, or my fear of watching him get sick. He eventually did get sick and moved back home to be with his family. Our relationship was brief, but I'll never forget him. It was the most intense relationship I've ever had.

ROGER

I particularly enjoyed the article on guys with disabilities getting involved with others with disabilities. For me, it's not whether someone has a disability or not, it's whether I am attracted to the person or just want to get to know the guy better. I've been attracted to both nondisabled and disabled guys. If I'm totally honest though, I think I want a long-term relationship with a nondisabled man. 

B A C K TALK



LETTERS VOICE-MAIL E-MAIL

ABLE-TOGETHER
may print extracts from
your communications,
identified by
your initials and state,
unless you specifically
ask us not to

HOW TO REACH US E-MAIL:

ABLTOGETHR@aol.com

VOICE MAIL/US:

415 522 9091

VOICE MAIL/UK:

01453 832782

LETTER POST:

ABLE-TOGETHER

P. O. Box 460053

San Francisco

CA 94146 USA

A MUCH NEEDED TOOL

Becoming aware of *Able-Together* four years ago was very encouraging, and I met my friend through an ad I ran shortly afterwards.

Although we live a long distance from one another, we have been "together" ever since.

I believe that A-T is a much-needed tool in bringing people together who would normally not have this opportunity

CB, British Columbia

Call us "romantic at heart" if you will: we LOVE hearing about it when men partner up through an ad in the Magazine. And we have a request for you both: stick around, stay close, renew your subscriptions, and keep letting us know how you're both doing! Was it easy? Was it hard? What advice does a four-year veteran in an A-T relationship have for people just beginning the journey?

TWO OUT OF THREE AIN'T BAD

You guys are doing a wonderful job for providing A-T so that we can have a voice and a way to meet one another. I was born with CP, so I know what it's like to be treated like a non-person. The "normals" see me as a pariah, somebody to be ignored, rejected and dishonored in every way. They think they know me by the person they see, but they never know the person inside. They miss a lot because of that, including some great sex! I concur with the editorial in the Fall 1998 issue that "we must transcend our own self-hatred," and I want to thank "Daddy Bear" Max Verga for his enlightening article, "The Kindness of Strangers." Lastly, I've been a subscriber almost since A-T's incep-

tion, and I want to say that I'm against corresponding with prisoners. It's been my experience that most prisoners want only money or a place to stay when they get out. That's not to say that all are that way, but most are, I'm sorry to say. Keep up the good work and much success.

LP, Colorado

Thank you for the feedback! And a big thank you for renewing your subscription each year. This, and your correspondence, rewards us by telling us we are meeting our editorial goal, which is to publish articles which help to get ourselves beyond "old" ways of seeing and being with disability. Max, we are sure, will be purring under your strokes, as we are.

As to the prisoners issue, we hear your unease. We think we now have a workable policy—see last issue—of allowing subscriptions to a disabled man in prison, but sending him his copy of the Magazine without the ads, so that the addresses of personals advertisers do not get misused in the way you suggest can occur. Read on for an appreciation of this scheme by its first beneficiary:

A PRISONER WRITES

I just wanted to write and thank you for putting my ad in the Fall issue. I know how most feel about writing to men in prison, but there are men as myself that want no more than a friend they can write to now and then just to do no more than say Hi. I'll be going for my back surgery this week and if things don't go the way they should I want you to know how much I appreciate what you've done for me. And if things do go well, I'll be sending a picture of myself out jogging. God Bless You.

Lannie Stephen Cox, Arizona State Prison, Florence, AZ


THE RIGHT STUFF

I really enjoy getting the Magazine—I think it's just the right mix. All power to your pens!

RP, Melbourne, Australia

You guys are great—I so much enjoy what you do, what you offer, and the possibilities you have created for all of us.

JS, Pennsylvania

Gentlemen, we love you too! Thanks for letting us know we are doing it right. 

NEW S M A K I N G

by Bob Guter and Peter Geiger

GUYS GET -TOGETHER FOR A-T's FIRST TWO BAY AREA SUNDAY BRUNCHES



"Build It

And They Will Come"

Well, we built it and they did come—twice!

On September 20th in San Francisco, *ABLE-TOGETHER, Inc.* threw its first-ever social, followed by a second on October 25th. Billed as a "Sunday Brunch," each informal get-together took place in the Castro at Josie's Juice Joint and Cabaret—not a joint by any means, and fully accessible. We extend hearty thanks to Josie's owner, Ron Lanza, for making us welcome in such a pleasant environment.

About twenty men showed up for each Brunch. With no agenda, no program, no speaker, it was just socializing, pure and simple, because



that's what YOU told us you wanted. And the smiles on the faces in the pictures overleaf tell it all. A-T was happy to see all kinds of men meeting and enjoying one another's company: guys in 'chairs, guys with crutches, guys with invisible disabilities, young guys, old guys, guys with hearing aids, guys with prostheses. Glory Be—there were even a few TABs!

See if our 1999 Cafe Dates match your next trip to SF

Some visiting out-of-towners got in on the act, which was lucky for us (see *Interview*, p. 10). YOU could be next!

Dates have been scheduled (see overleaf) for ten San Francisco "Sunday Cafe's" in 1999. The first, on January 24th, will be held at *Buddies*, 498 Sanchez @ 18th: *be there!*

ABLE-TOGETHER, POB 460053, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146, USA
Voicemail US: 415-522 9091/email: ABLTOGETHR@aol.com/Voicemail UK: 01453 832782

ABLE-TOGETHER is a quarterly international magazine for bisexual and gay men with and without disabilities, published by ABLE-TOGETHER, Inc., a California public benefit corporation exempt from federal taxes under IRS Section 501(c)3. A-T's Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall issues appear in January, April, July and October. A-T has subscribers across the US, and in Canada, the UK and elsewhere across the globe. You can buy the magazine at certain gay / progressive bookstores in the US, also in the UK.

ABLE-TOGETHER is edited by Bob Guter, an amputee since age six; A-T looks at the interface of disability and nondisability from *both* viewpoints, and seeks to bridge the gaps which our socialization has created from a perspective emphasizing the generation of positive feeling and experience in men's relationships.

ABLE-TOGETHER's fifty-two page *Winter 1999* issue takes a hard look at societal discrimination against both disabled men and gay men, and features an interview with a couple who met each other through the A-T personals; nineteen pages of subscribers' personal contact ads are listed. A-T is its subscribers—who contribute articles, poems, bulletin-board notices, letters and art to the magazine, and help with outreach locally.

ABLE-TOGETHER applies all subscription, sales and donation revenues to production, advertising and outreach costs. A-T's international outreach program includes sending informational materials and flyers to independent living centers and to the disabled students' programs and the gay and lesbian students' associations of colleges in the US and Canada; A-T has advertised in US regional gay newspapers and nationally in publications such as *New Mobility*, *The Disability Rag* and *Advocate Classifieds*; in Canada in *Disability Today*; and in the newsletter of the Spinal Injuries Association and in *Disability Now* and *Gay Times* in the UK. A-T's home on the Internet is: <http://www.well.com/user/blaine/abletog.html>

ABLE-TOGETHER full-year subscribers *only* may submit a personal contact ad for publication for as long as the subscription is active; changes and updates to ads are encouraged; ads may be box#-coded for privacy; A-T does not profit from forwarding replies to coded ads, but we ask that responders reimburse our forwarding postage costs; we reserve the right to edit ads for length and content.

ABLE-TOGETHER costs \$30US/£18.50/C\$42.50/A\$44.50/NZ\$53.50 (full subscribers may pay by your personal check drawn in your domestic currency) for a full year's subscription of four issues, inclusive of a personal contact ad listing at no additional charge; for men with low incomes this is reduced to \$15US (US \$ only, please) or \$20US if you send us a photo to be scanned and published with your ad; or you may purchase a single issue for \$5US (US \$ only, please). A-T goes by airmail to overseas subscribers.

ABLE-TOGETHER is news: A-T has received mention in *New Mobility*, in the newsletters of the American Association of Physicians for Human Rights and of the Boston Information Center for Individuals with Disabilities, as well as in gay newspapers and magazines such as *Mandate*, and, locally, the *San Francisco Bay Area Reporter* and *All Points North* in the UK. Organizational subscribers include the World Institute on Disability in Oakland, California, the Homodok Archives in Amsterdam, The Netherlands and the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society in San Francisco, Ca.

SUBSCRIPTION AND PERSONAL CONTACT AD REQUEST INFORMATION

When you decide to become a full-year subscriber to A-T you have a choice of starting your subscription with either the **currently available** issue or the **next** issue. Because your ad (if you submit one) will only be published whilst your subscription is active, **this choice affects the number of times your ad can appear!** *This means that if you want your ad to be published four times during your first year with A-T you must specify that you want your subscription to start with the next issue and your subscription payment and ad must be received by us before the deadline.*

DEADLINES: ABLE-TOGETHER needs your ad copy by **5th March for Spring issue, 5th June for Summer issue, 5th September for Fall issue, and 5th December for Winter issue.** New, renewed or changed ads reaching us after these dates are not guaranteed to appear in the issue published the following month. We will try, but...

UPGRADE OPTION: If you buy a single copy of the current issue of A-T for \$5US you may upgrade to a full-year subscription by payment (within three months) of the balance of **\$25US/£15/C\$35.50/A\$37/NZ\$44** (full subscribers), or **\$10US**—low income (US \$ only, please); an upgrade form will be sent to you with your first A-T.

-----to
ABLE-TOGETHER, POB 460053, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146, USA

- PERSONAL CONTACT AD REQUEST FORM -

PLEASE PUBLISH THE FOLLOWING AD WHILE MY SUBSCRIPTION REMAINS ACTIVE:

Signed _____ Date _____

I would like my ad to be: box#-coded uncoded (please check one)
(we recommend your ad be box#-coded unless you have a P O Box address)

Text of my ad: (include name/address/phone # as you want it to appear in the ad)

_____ (attach separate sheet if necessary)

-----to
ABLE-TOGETHER, POB 460053, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146, USA

- SUBSCRIPTION /ORDER FORM -

Name: _____ Date _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone #: _____

____ I would like a FULL-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION (inclusive of personal ad)

starting with _____ the current issue / the next _____ issue (specify issue date)

I enclose _____ \$30US/ £18.50/ C\$42.50/ A\$44.50/ NZ\$53.50, or _____ \$15US low income,
or _____ \$20US with photo to scan

____ Please send me a SINGLE ISSUE of the newsletter; _____ I enclose \$5US

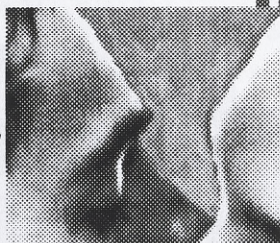
WINTER 1999: I

(please check as applicable)

You
are cordially invited to
the 1999
ABLE-TOGETHER
Sunday Cafe Socials

Sun Jan 24th at 2pm	Sun Jun 20th at 2pm
Sun Feb 21st at 2pm	Sun Jul 18th at 2pm
Sun Mar 21st at 2pm	Sun Aug 22nd at 2pm
Sun Apr 18th at 2pm	Sun Sep 19th at 2pm
Sun May 23rd at 2pm	Sun Oct 24th at 2pm

*Join a bunch of good men like you
Friendly, w'chair accessible location
In the heart of SF's gay Upper Market,
easily reached by BART/MUNI.*



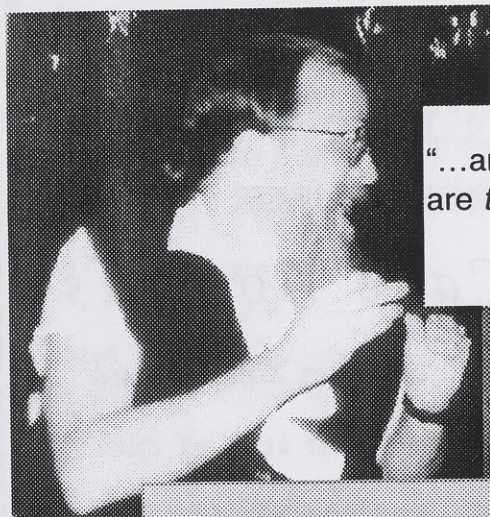
**BE SEEN HAVING A GOOD TIME
WITH OTHER DISABLED/NONDISABLED MEN!!**

ABLE-TOGETHER
POB 460053, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146, USA

***RSVP to:** Voice Mail—US: 415 522 9091

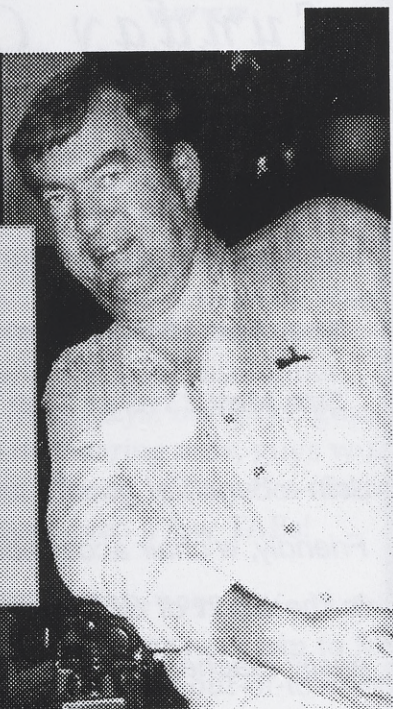
***RSVP to:** e-mail: ABLTOGETHR@aol.com

**dates and venues subject to confirmation: please leave your
telephone number on the voice-mail so we can call you back*

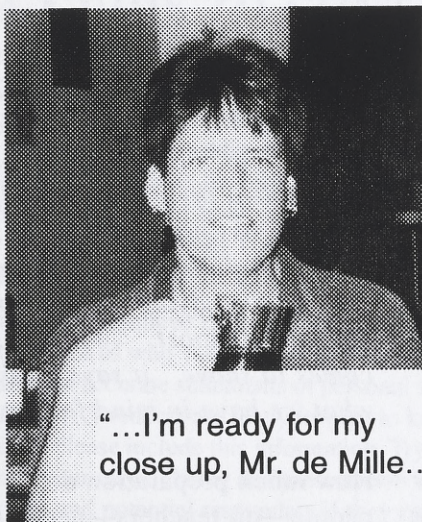


*"...and some of them
are **this** big..."*

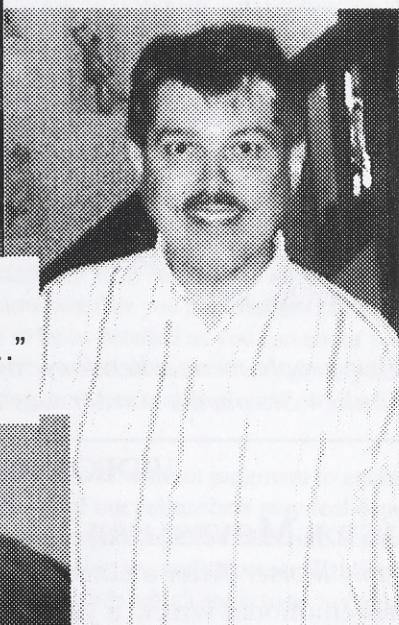
***Scene and herd
at
the October 25th
ABLE-
TOGETHER
Sunday Brunch***



*Blaine being
Presidential and
visionary...*



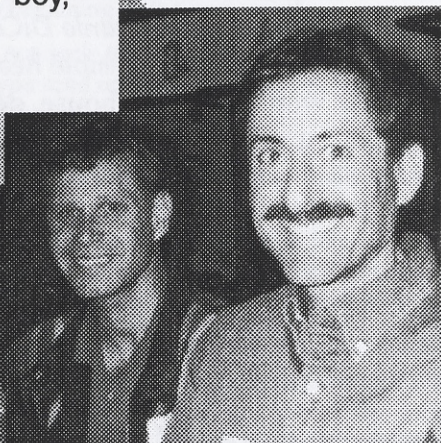
"...I'm ready for my close up, Mr. de Mille..."



...and Michael P looking to see the books are kept straight



"...who's a pretty boy, then..."




GALLAGHER, continued from p. 21

it means they have to be more committed. I don't worry about them, except to say that their comments must be responded to.

To those teachers who complained that they weren't adequately prepared for the subject, I can only submit one more quotation, this one from *Time*, October 26, 1998:

What people mean when they say Matthew Shepard's murder was a

lynching is that he was killed to make a point. When he was 21 years old, the world's arguments reached him with deadly force and printed their worst conclusions across him. So he was stretched along a Wyoming fence not just as a dying young man but as a signpost. "When push comes to shove," it says, "this is what we have in mind for gays."

How much preparation do people—do teachers—need? 

VIDEOS WORTH RENTING

INSIDE MOVES [1980] 113m. D: Richard Donner. John Savage, David Morse. After a botched suicide that leaves him a physical and emotional wreck, a young man wanders into a neighborhood bar where a group of disabled men hang out. An imperfect but rare look at self-perception and disability.

WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE [1993] 117m. D: Lasse Hallstrom. Johnny Depp, Leonardo DiCaprio. Depp, looking soulful and sexy, is the super-responsible head of an odd family—mother so large she won't leave the house, developmentally disabled little brother (DiCaprio), whose great joy is climbing the town's water tower. A film so emotionally honest it can be hard to watch.

WEB-SITES WORTH VISITING

Accessible Vacation Home Exchange, a service of the Institute for Independent Living. Worldwide swap possibilities: <http://www.independentliving.org/VacationHomeSwap.html>

Amputation Online Magazine, news of innovative prosthetic techniques, interviews with users. Published every two months: <http://amputee-online.com/amputation>

A GUIDE TO CONTACT AD LISTINGS

HOW TO REPLY TO A CODED AD: Put your letter in an envelope, seal it, and put the A-T code # of the advertiser you are replying to in the top right corner of the envelope; if you know your A-T code #, put this (or your initials) in the bottom left corner; **do not put your return address on this envelope**; put this envelope, together with the correct reimbursement for forwarding, please, (see below) in another envelope. This outer envelope should have your return address: seal, address to A-T and mail! You may respond to as many coded ads as you wish, and put all the code-numbered envelopes in the one outer envelope to mail to us.


CONTENT: We believe the best kind of ad is the one that gives the reader the most accurate idea of who you are. We therefore encourage ad length (but reserve the right to edit) and accurate statements of personal statistics such as age and weight. Bear in mind that A-T readers are likely to want to know whether you are disabled or nondisabled, so please include this information. Try to be as detailed as you can about yourself and your way of being and presentation in the world, because it very greatly helps both you and potential responders if they can gain a reasonable picture of you from the ad. *We encourage changes and updates to ads!*

EDITING POLICY: Although ABLE-TOGETHER strives without judgment to encourage honest self-expression we are aware that many of our subscribers may feel depersonalized and objectified in response to certain personal contact ad material. Because of the importance A-T attaches to avoiding objectification and depersonalization in interpersonal relations, we may edit personal contact ads which seem to us to contain sexually overly explicit or overly fetishistic material.

DEADLINES: ABLE-TOGETHER needs your ad copy by 5th March for Spring issue, 5th June for Summer issue, 5th September for Fall issue and 5th December for Winter issue. New, renewed or changed ads reaching us after these dates are not guaranteed to appear in the issue published at the beginning of the next month.

POSTAGE: ABLE-TOGETHER does not seek to profit from forwarding replies to coded contact ads but we do ask that you send us full reimbursement for our postage costs in forwarding your reply to the advertiser:

- for US responses to US advertisers, this is a 32ct stamp;
- for US responses to Canada, this is a 46ct stamp;
- for US responses to advertisers outside the US or Canada, this is a \$1 stamp;
- for overseas responders who do not have US stamps and wish to send a \$1 bill, this will cover three replies within the US or two to Canada or one elsewhere; but please note that these rates are for minimum-weight letters; heavier items cost more to send, and when in doubt, please check at the post office.

PAYMENT: Remittance of forwarding costs may be made to ABLE-TOGETHER in valid US postage stamps, in currency, or by personal check or money order drawn in US Dollars. Please, no international reply coupons or foreign currency checks for this purpose. All payments are sent to us at sender's risk. A-T does not accept responsibility for materials sent to us to be forwarded, and we reserve the right to destroy materials not accompanied by adequate reimbursement for forwarding costs. 

PERSONAL CONTACTS INITIATED THROUGH ABLE-TOGETHER CONTACT AD LISTINGS ARE DONE SO ENTIRELY AT THE RISK AND ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERSONS CONCERNED: WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE DOING WHAT YOU WANT TO BE DOING, AND WITH THE PERSON YOU WANT TO BE DOING IT WITH; IF YOU DECIDE TO BE SEXUAL WITH SOMEONE YOU ARE VERY STRONGLY URGED **FIRST TO CALL YOUR LOCAL AIDS/STD HOTLINE FOR ADVICE.**

CALIFORNIA. Hi—I'm Bret, a tall, goofy Farm-boy type guy transplanted from the Midwest to San Francisco back in the 80's. Turned 40 this December 1998, Capricorn/Year of the Dog, if you're interested in that kind of stuff. SGWM, 6'3", 210, with dark hair and blue/green eyes, boyish face, usually clean shaven except on weekends when I can get a little scruffy. HIV-negative, but that isn't a requirement. Semi-disabled with ruptured/herniated discs, muscle and nerve damage in lower back and legs, has been progressing for twenty years, may get worse as time goes on. Have some limitations, but do what I can. Love trips to Disneyland, music, books, movies, Mystery Science Theater 3000, walks/hikes, crafts, lots of other things. More of a romantic, love to cuddle under the blankets when it's cold and raining out with a good (or cheesy) movie on the VCR and someone nice to hold. Looking for pen pals, friends, dates, LTR with other able or disabled man in San Francisco or anywhere. Also looking to start studying ASL again, and would like to hear from others who use ASL or have studied or like to study—maybe take courses together? Prefer guys between late 20s and late 40s, N/S, N/D, if possible. Kind of shy at first, but open, honest, friendly and funny once I get to know a person. Photo/Phone appreciated. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1667.*

MY NAME IS MICHAEL. I am 45, 6', 210#. I am a right AK amputee. I have a lot of interests, including music, (alternative rock,



classical, jazz, world), reading (novels and newspapers mostly), travel, eating out, movies, concerts and theater. I am looking to meet able-bodied men who are 37—48 years old, preferably, and who live in the Southern California area (or visit here regularly) for friendship and perhaps romance. My friends describe me as a fun-loving, interesting and sincere person and I am looking for same. If my being an amputee is a turn-on for you that is just fine by me but I would frankly prefer not to be contacted by amputee wannabes or those seeking phone or cyber sex. Please drop me a note at Cybermykel@aol.com (please mention ABLE-TOGETHER in the subject line so I won't mistake

it for a spam) or *replies with correct postage please to A-T #330.*

SAN FRANCISCO. Outgoing, energetic, nondisabled man, 38, 5'11", 175#, who enjoys adventure, romance, keeping busy and quiet times, nature and city life, friendship, would like to correspond with and meet disabled man who shares an active mind and a love of life. I'm a health professional, enjoy travel, communication, and look forward to talking. *Steven, 4010—19th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, or ph: (415) 621 8208.*

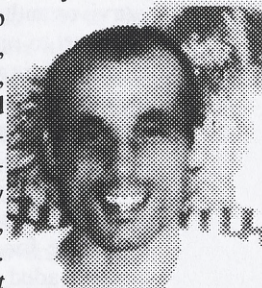
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CALIFORNIA. GWM 45, 5'7", 180#, legally disabled 1989 w. atypical facial pain & major depression. Average to good looks, short brown greying hair and hazel eyes. I am clean and honest and live on a limited income. I enjoy b/w vintage film and like to mountain bike to nearest coffee shop. I would like to get out of my apartment and see nature—perhaps travel and see your part of the world. It's much more fun when you can share life's experiences with someone. *David Martin, 203 Neds Way, Tiburon, CA 94920.*

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. Charlie, 55, 6', 180 lbs, blond/blue, mild heart condition, seeking companion to enjoy each other's company; interests—conversation, movies, travel, quiet times. SS. Possible LTR. Please be sincere. No drugs. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1455.*

THE REAL THING. I'm a friendly, down-to-earth, 34 year-old GWM, looking for a longterm romantic relationship with a compatible guy. You share my love of movies, and might also be interested in theater, science fiction, history, politics, or psychology. I love to hug, kiss and cuddle with my man; you're the same way. I'm attractive, HIV-neg., a nonsmoker, 5'7", 135 lbs., moderately disabled—walk with crutches, go for walks in my cool new power 'chair. You are roughly 25-45, any race, attractive, intelligent, HIV-neg., also a nonsmoker. Local preferred, but—who knows! *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #013, or e-mail: sfshygy@aol.com*



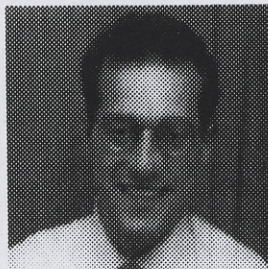
SAN FRANCISCO. Paraprofessional GM 5'7", 145#, 50 (still passing for mid-to-late 30s), with exotic blend of ethnically-diverse (Hispanic-Eurasian) good looks, medium-buzzed black hair, boyish face, heart-warming smile, captivating dark brown eyes, silky-smooth hairless body, wants to share loving, validating, intellectually and sexually stimulating good times with the right guy, possibly as potential new boyfriends. HIV-negative, health-conscious, post-polio and wears a left leg brace. Busy, active life, but likes dinner out and a good movie, occasional dancing and a little night life, exploring the sites, camping amidst nature, and get togethers with mutual friends and family. Really enjoys those simple, intimate times with a partner, playing together on the computer, tending the garden, or sacked out in bed reading, listening to music, watching a video movie, and cuddling and being tender. Write me so we can swap phone numbers. *Robby, POB 14104, San Francisco, CA 94114-4104.*

SAN DIEGO AREA. Shy GWM, post-polio with leg brace, younger looking 53, 5'11", 200lbs, hazel eyes, likes nude fun and SM/BD games indoors and out. Enjoy quiet evenings at home, dinner out, travel, etc. Interested in meeting guys, disabled or not, for friendship, pen pals, safe sex. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #137.*

PLACE IN THE SUN. White jewish male, nondisabled, healthy, attractive and athletic 48 year old professional. I'm well kept and in good shape, a hairy, muscular 5'10"/165# with nice chest and arms, bald/shaved head, blond goatee. A glass with dinner, no smokes/drugs, HIV-neg. I am warm, caring, decent, stable, intelligent, honest and straightforward. Would like to hear from disabled or nondisabled man interested in good connection...intimate friendship... travel...dating...hanging out...sharing place in the sun. I like talking on the phone, cooking, laughing, hanging out, eating together, Seinfeld, Simpsons, fringe theater, movies, working out, physical affection. I like men who are understanding, adventurous, athletic-within-ability, 25-50. San Francisco/UK/beyond. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #252.*



SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA. GWM 51, 5' 6", 155 lbs, polio survivor and cane user, iso black or dark-complexioned GM. Want to add zest to my life and having a man in my arms who truly wants to be there brings a sparkle to my eyes and a smile to my face. I lead an active and busy life, so when I stop, I'm tired. I'm looking for someone who is fairly quiet, gentle—shy ok—who desires to connect on a physical and emotional level ranging from occasional dates to sex buddy, boyfriends, soul-mates—let's let the connection between us decide where we go. I neither offer nor expect physical perfection, but hope for chemistry. I'm emotional, sometimes sad, but mostly level-headed and very stable: "walking the talk" is what I offer you, and hope to receive. Please call 415—621 2938 before 9 pm PDT, or *replies with correct postage please to A-T #1224.*



LOS ANGELES/SoCAL. GWM 30, 5'6", 135 lbs, brn/brn, outgoing professional, interested in social causes, neuromuscular disorder since birth, use wheelchair, crutches; sincere, honest guy who likes to go swimming and sit out in the sun. Seek cute guy, disabled or nondisabled, who's interested in conversation, dinners, movies, sex and loving. Write with photo. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1518, or e-mail: PETERnLA@aol.com*

OAKLAND, CA. Able GWM, 52 and tall spirit, looking to share friendship and possible companionship; exchange includes good conversation, possible local travel, home-cooked delights with quality music and video. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1811.*

CALIFORNIA. I am a 60 year old GWM, weighing 225#, 5'8", very hirsute, and versatile. I moved to LA from NYC when I retired on disability from teaching American history in high school. I lost the use of my left leg because of MS, the rest of my body is in fine working order. I am a very caring, loving person looking for someone to share the rest of my life with. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #436.*

OAKLAND. Able GWM, 52 and tall spirit, looking to share friendship and possible companionship; exchange includes good conversation, possible local travel, home cooked delights with quality music and video. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1811.*

CALIFORNIA. 41, GWM, good-looking, slim to medium build T-10 paraplegic. I live in San Francisco, and am looking for a top guy for good times and friendship. I respond to all mail and would like to meet if it's right. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1415, or e-mail: paramale@aol.com*

CALIFORNIA. Employed, energetic nondisabled man, 6', 180#, 62, (9/19/36), w blondish/greying hair and in very good health. I love most types of individuals, regardless of age or handicap. One of my favorite passions is to go into the desert to Hot Springs for retreats in the summer. I love the solitude, spirituality and beauty of the desert, and the healing qualities of the springs. I have a favorite place (clothing optional) like the proverbial Garden of Eden. I would like to find someone to go with me in the summers for retreats. Have a VW van, can provide transportation. If you're interested I can provide more details and will tell you more about myself. I am interested in most kinds of music, mostly classical, "New Age," Steve Halpern, Aeolia etc... I am interested in the Yoga/Zen concept of living in spite of being raised in Christianity. I love to meditate, I strive to perfect unconditional love to all. I enjoy reading, my interests in life are varied. I am open, honest, non-judgmental, up-front. Not a great conversationalist, I enjoy listening. If you would like to get out into Nature, in total peace and solitude, lay around in beautiful warm mineral pools in sensual nakedness, no television, bring books or music, work on your journal or just "vegetate," then please respond. I believe in prayer, massage and healing touch. I would love to share that with you. *Robert W. Rice, 14149 Cates Court, Chowchilla, CA 93610, ph: 209 665 1479.*

CALIFORNIA. I'm a middle-aged GWM, 5'10", 200 lbs., using crutches occasionally when my ankle flares up. I am seeking a young man, disabled or nondisabled, preferably under 40, for friendship /romance/possible relationship. My interests include classical music, movies, museums, dining out. *Michael, POB 4054, Berkeley, CA 94704.*

COLORADO. Toothless Boytoy or Mantoy. Spanish/German GWM with CP, ambulatory, 49 years young, salt & pepper, beard & mustache, brown eyes, 5'4", 130 lbs, HIV-neg. I want to meet stable, healthy, talentedly-oral "Daddy-type" GWMs, nondisabled and disabled, 30-60 yrs. I have a lot to offer the right goodlooking deserving

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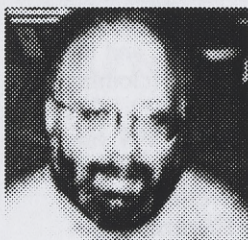
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man. You must meet my requirements as I must meet yours. Positive responses gets positive results. Interested GWMs please write with photo (returned upon request) and I will send you mine. Look forward to some good times. Thank you. *Mr. Luis Perez, 1955 Arapahoe Street #806, Denver, CO 80202-1834, or ph: 303 291 0806.*



COLORADO. Early retired GWM, N/S, N/D, teddy bear type guy with clipped beard, hairy, is looking for LTR, handicapped or not, Into antiques, thrift store, flea market, classic cars, concerts, off-beat film, trips and you. Looking for sane same who is interested in not being alone, has some income, and not into gay lifestyle. *Occupant, POB 38471, Colorado Springs, CO 80937.*

DELAWARE. Hi! My name is Frank Veasey, 37 year old disabled GWM, 5'11" tall, brown hair, blue eyes, 200 lbs. ISO pen-pals, disabled or not. Also ISO LTR with nondisabled male, 25-35 preferred. I'm caring, honest, fun, loving. *Frank Veasey, POB 838, Bear, DE 19701-0838.*



FLORIDA. 43 year old disabled bear with cp, br/bl 5'1" (not a typo), 175 pounds, use a cane for walking and a wheelchair for long distance, looking for a stable relationship with love and romance: am on disability so relocation is not a problem if we are compatible; love warm weather—especially Hawaii—love to travel read and learn about computer stuff. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #256.*

FLORIDA. GWM 42, 6', 200 lbs, br/br, nondisabled, in search of GWM 20-50 disabled who walks with crutches. I am an honest, caring, trustworthy male who is seeking to welcome new friends into my life. All correspondence will be answered. *Michael Kirnard, 1025 N. Thorpe Ave., Orange City, FL 32763.*

FLORIDA. Retired GWM, former social worker, teacher, correctional and parole officer and ordained Baptist clergyman with personal experience that GAY AND GOD GO GOOD TOGETHER! I'm a full time RV-er, winter in South Florida and hope to travel widely 7-8 months a year if I can find a truly gay life partner to join me. I am 67 years old, though look younger, 5'11", 215 pounds, dark blond hair, moustache, blue eyes, wear glasses, HIV-, mildly disabled due to diabetes and three heart attacks in 1996. Have been living alone the last four years since my 27 year old lover for seven years decided to take on the straight life. Am sincerely looking for a younger truly gay guy who wants and needs the security and love a LTR with a man my age will give him. Live and travel in a 32' travel trailer with a/c and satellite tv and a collection of over 2000 videos. Your photo gets mine. Eventual spousal relationship preferred, but visitors welcome, ages 18-?? *Ken Debus, POB 63, Lake Harbor, FL 33459.*

FLORIDA. Sensitive, caring, 45-year old male seeks friendship first, companionship second. I am partially physically disabled from a prior brain tumor, but have remained whole in mind and spirit. I value humor, kindness and, above all else, honesty in relationships. If you are a positive-minded individual with a zest for life, I would love to hear from you. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1024*

ILLINOIS. GWM 35, 170#, brown hair, grey eyes, HIV-negative, like fishing, camping, hiking, bowling, movies, dancing, travel and eating out. Looking for friendship or relationship. *John Nowack, 1536—4th Street Ct. E., Milan, IL 61624-3416, or ph: 309 756 3743.*

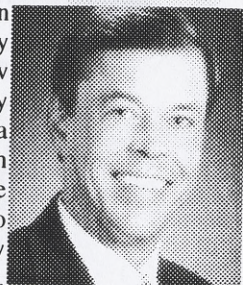


ILLINOIS. Nondisabled GWM 62, 6', 188#, blond, short beard, non-smoker, HIV-neg. Want to meet a monogamous partner with or without disabilities, especially in San Francisco, Ca. I'm affectionate, quiet, like French food/wine, vitamins/herbs, felines, gardening, spirituality. *Harold R. Schuring, 300 N. State Street, #5718, Chicago, IL 60610, or ph: 312 670 3507.*

ILLINOIS. GWM, nondisabled, is attracted to and interested in corresponding with and meeting guys who wear leg braces, also guys wearing teeth braces. *Terry Troutman, POB 1107, Arlington Heights, IL 60006-1107, or e-mail: DTIRR@AOL.COM*

INDIANA. SGWM 47, 5' 11", 175#. I am nondisabled, straight-acting, nonsmoker, nondrinker, brown hair, brown eyes, mustache, love country living, animals, chickens, pigeons, canaries that I raise as a hobby. I also work with men with AIDS. I enjoy physical fitness, music, theater, lite/health cooking, dining out, conversation, not into the bar scene or drugs, am an outgoing guy, romantic guy. Looking for guys 25 to 50 yrs. *Don, 88 W. 850 N., Valparaiso, IN 46385.*

INDIANAPOLIS. Gdlkg GWM 41, 5'6", 135-140, br/gr, killer smile, clean shaven, clean cut, drug free, outgoing, energetic, successful, independent, educated, voracious reader, professional, humorous, have an active mind and love life. I am also a survivor of polio, walk with a leg brace and use crutches. I manage a small company involved in financing commercial real estate. I enjoy travel (favorites: Key West, San Francisco, Palm Springs, Chicago, NYC, DC and a few European cities), a good book, a large circle of far flung friends, my work, movies, dinner out and the morning paper on the sofa with a good cup of joe. My belief: one day, he'll come along, we'll both recognize the chemistry and off into the sunset we'll go. While keeping that process moving along, I continue in the meantime to make some wonderful friends. I am attracted to men who know where they are going and want to share that journey with someone. Prefer an able bodied man (30 to 50ish) sharing some of my interests. Looking to make a few good friends, and, who knows, perhaps Mr. Right may read this...*Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1695.*



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MARYLAND. GWM, mature, hairy, 6ft, blue/brown-gray, 205lbs. Life-long attraction to GMs with one leg shorter than the other or club foot or limp, also polio survivors. I am truthful, loving, monogamous and considerate. I like antiques, classical music & opera, cooking, travel, loving home in beautiful environment. My handicap is a short penis with small, mis-mated balls. Pen pals appreciated. Contact: *John, 1110 Fidler Lane #801, Silver Spring, MD 20910*, or ph. 301 589 1873.

MASSACHUSETTS. I have been an amputee (right arm AE) for most of my life (car accident when I was 23). Being an amputee has been a challenge but not a limitation. Learning to love my body has taken some time, but I'm there now and I have been trying to take good care of it by exercising regularly. As a result I'm in excellent physical condition—57, 5'11", 150 hard lbs, light brown hair, short beard, HIV-neg. I'm well educated and teach biology at a small college. My interests range from nature to sports cars. Living on Cape Cod all summer, I manage to spend a great deal of time on the beach and I love to sunbathe in the nude. Through this newsletter-magazine I have learned that there is much for me to share with both fellow amputees and those who are attracted to us. I'm interested in corresponding/meeting/visiting other upper-extremity amputees and "devotees". Let's enjoy each other. **E-mail: tfilteau@capecod.net** or write: *Ted, POB 1175, N. Eastham, MA 02651*.

MASSACHUSETTS. Gwm, age 35, born 8/8/62, 5' 2", 185lbs, blue eyes, brown hair, mustache. I was born with a rare disability called *lymphatic vascular malformations*. Which means—I *hemangioma*: a benign growth of rapidly dividing cells that form extra blood vessels; 2

vascular malformation: a permanent collection of abnormal capillaries, veins, or lymphatics, occurring either as single channel type or in combination. So what does this mean for me? Well, I have a bigger left hand than normal, I am in constant pain all day and my right leg is affected by this and I can't do much walking; sometimes I use a cane. My interests are tv, music, hand-made crafts, photography, basketball, stamp collection, bank collection, swimming, bowling, playing cards and board games and many more things. If you are a nonsmoker, honest, trustworthy, loyal and caring,



please send photo and phone. Looking for friends and possible relationship. *Bobby, 33 Merri Village, Merrimac, MA 01860*, ph: 978 346 4495, or e-mail: rship33@Earthlink.net or rship33@aol.com

MICHIGAN. Nondisabled GWM, 6', 185 lbs, would like to meet/correspond with guys who are amputees and/or wear dentures. *Please write: POB 186, East Tawas, MI 48730*.

MINNESOTA. GWM 52, 5'10", 180#, br/hz, looking for life partner with whom to share mutual achievements, interests and lifestyle amenities. I'm a successful professional post-polio wheelchair user in a north central community, very loving, very committed in relationships, open minded and with few hangups. I'm interested in a GWM 35-45, cur-

rently abled, HIV-neg., secure, together, with a great sense of humor, affectionate, and successful in his life goals. Interest in outdoor as well as indoor life a plus. Sincere letters will receive replies (photo nice but not initially necessary). *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #791.*

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NEBRASKA. GWM, SCI: para, 41, 6', 175 lbs, HIV-neg., seeking contacts, email buddies, friends...Maybe more later? Interests are music (Blues, Country, Soul esp.), reading (Anne Rice, Cyberpunk, SF, escapist trash, gay socio-politics, so I don't sound like a cultural infidel), travel and exercise. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1778, or email: berdache@inetnebr.com*

MD

NEW HAMPSHIRE. GWM, 50, 6', 185 lbs, reddish hair (some grey). blue eyes, big red mustache, nondisabled, honest, sincere, kind. I love the country and mountains; I collect and restore Victorian antiques, and have a business making custom crutches out of woods such as rosewood and ebony. I am attracted to men who are amputees. Looking to hear from an amputee, and from others abled and disabled, with a view to friendship, maybe more. Photo and phone # appreciated. *Ed Openshaw, POB 65, Rumney, NH 03266, ph: 603 786 9922.*

NJ

NEW HAMPSHIRE. Hello Everyone. I'm a visually impaired bisexual man. I am currently not in a relationship. I have just organized a nudist men's group. I am 6 ft tall and have brown hair. Looking to correspond with other gay or bi men by email. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1821 or E-mail: mensrap@usa.net*

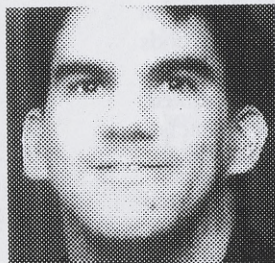
NORTHERN NEW JERSEY. Partially disabled, ambulatory, heavy GWM looking for LTR. Me: 50, 6 feet tall, 265 lbs, dark brown eyes, hair, beard and moustache, HIV-neg. I can't go up or down stairs and I need help getting up from a chair and out of a car. Other than that, I'm cool. I have an excellent "up" attitude. I'm a lot of fun to be with. I love to laugh, cuddle and snuggle. I'm a first class cuddler (a real Teddy Bear!). I'm very tactile. I love to touch and be touched. Some of my interests are: classical music, museums, books, bookstores, shopping, restaurants, movies, videos and stamp collecting. You: abled GWM 32-55, HIV-neg., build can be slim, average, wiry or muscular, in the Greater NJ/Manhattan Metropolitan Area. Some similar likes would be great, but not essential. Be strong for me, buddy. Letter and photo get mine. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #613.*



NEW JERSEY. GBM, 29, 5'5", 130 lbs., br/br, clean shaven, healthy and in shape. I am handsome, intelligent, educated, honest, spiritual, warm and loving. Despite a mild form of cerebral palsy, I am very active. I enjoy exercise, music, movies, dancing, cooking, and quiet times cuddling with the one I love. Although I am open to new friendships I am seeking a monogamous relationship with a similar trustworthy GM of any

race, age 25-45, with strong values, who wants to build a home. He must be financially secure, healthy, emotionally secure, drug/alcohol free, open-minded and non-possessive. I prefer a gentleman who is able-bodied or mildly disabled. Please respond with address, photo and phone. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1321.*

NEW JERSEY. Outgoing, energetic, dynamic, nondisabled 48 yo GWM, 5'10", HIV-neg., with brown hair and hazel eyes, seeks the joy and pleasure of meeting a young, body-building, above-knee amputee male for creative friendship. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1229.*



NEW JERSEY. GWM 34, 5'10", 170 lbs. "As Good As It Gets." Have had Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) for 19 years, for which I receive SSD. I enjoy hugs, affection, touching, holding and being held, watching TV and movies, driving, traveling, humor, gay events/meetings, talking on the 'phone, swimming pools, singing, and my cat, Brownie. I am seeking a loving friendship, and a long-term relationship. I am pretty liberal and have Christian beliefs. I don't smoke or drink and prefer you be the same. I prefer a good-looking man with a pretty hairy chest and arms, but clean shaven. I like men 21-48, HIV-neg., caring, honest, trustworthy, very affectionate, romantic, easygoing and sensitive. Can relocate for the right person. Please include recent photo. Call or write. *Jeff Woerner, POB 7049, Plainfield, NJ 07060-0799, or ph: 908 769 3665. God bless you.*

NEW YORK CITY. I'm Frank, a 25 y.o. graduate student in an extraordinary program which entails the study of philosophy, psychology, and educational theory. A "big-R" Romantic, interested in the cultivation of imagination, both in myself and in others. Have arthritis in most of my joints with noticeable stiffness and occasional pain, and yet live very independently. I'm an involved LBGQTQ activist, as well. ISO someone who likes to explore ideas and the arts, who will cook with me, and who is trying to live "the good life." Non-smokers, 21+ preferred. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1802, or E-mail: fs94@columbia.edu*



NEW YORK CITY. GWM, nondisabled, 40, 185, 6', very handsome with classic Mediterranean good looks, clean shaven, masculine, intelligent professional, muscular, gym-fit, HIV-neg., sensitive, stable, affectionate, easygoing and emotionally secure. For as long as I can remember I have always been strongly attracted to physically "different" types of guys. Looking to meet men to explore safe mutual sexual good times and more. Call 212 595 5755 or *replies with correct postage please to A-T #287.*

NEW YORK. GWM 28, 5' 8", 155, br/br, playwright, college-educated, wheelchair user, fit and healthy, looking to meet new friends and possible relationship with a nondisabled or disabled guy who is smart, funny and kind. My interests include theatre, film, politics, psychology and good conversation. NYC area and under 35 a plus, but all are welcome. *John. Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1604, or e-mail: thepooddle@aol.com*

NEW YORK. Goodlooking GWM 40, nondisabled. I work in the arts and travel frequently. I am looking for disabled male friends for fun and whatever that may lead to. Guys ages 20-50—perhaps with wheelchair, braces, post-polio—all welcomed. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #384.*

NEW YORK/elsewhere. Hi! I am 63 years old. I had rheumatic fever as a child, which caused heart problems. The last time around, 12 years ago, I had a stroke. I couldn't talk. Now I can talk a little better. I'm so glad I'm busy working: I direct plays in the theatre. Often I am traveling to work in Atlanta, California, Europe, etc. I would like to meet mature men. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1760.*

NEW YORK. Attractive, nondisabled w/m with Daddy Bear looks and attitude, 50 yrs., 6', 275 lbs, mostly white beard and moustache, close-cropped hair, hairy body, piercings and tats, and the imagination to go beyond a partner's physical limitations. Long time disability activist interested in meeting men with a wide range of disabilities/differences. Enjoy guys comfortable with the idea that I could be attracted to them and their disabilities. But also love exchanging thoughts with guys new to being an object of desire. Got a long-term lover, but still seeking like-minded guys who I can share ideas, fantasies, fetishes, and yes, some rewarding one-on-one contacts with. Non-sexual interests include writing, theatre, costume design, crafts, music (Broadway to Bach, but little Rock). A body is a terrible thing to waste. Let's not be putt off by our differences, let's revel in them!. Call Max at 718 852 1960 or **E-mail: BKBearMax@aol.com** or *replies with correct postage please to A-T #919.*

NEW YORK. Cuddly GWM 57, 5' 10", 175#, HIV-neg., short dark brown hair, gray-trimmed beard, hairy chest, arms and legs, masculine, down to earth, attractive, professional. I have a moderate case of Tourette's Syndrome, which causes vocalizations and tics. However I have enough control over the vocalizations that I can go to the theater and enjoy most of what life has to offer. Besides the TS, I'm slightly disabled by spondylolisthesis. I can't run a marathon, but I can still get around almost as well as anyone else. In addition I wear diapers for mild incontinence and a breathing mask when I sleep for a mild case of sleep apnea. I know that some guys are into the handicapped. That's fine. You can enjoy my disabilities and abilities. Anything goes that is safe and mutually agreeable. Let's get together and explore the possibilities whether it be for friendship, an erotic interlude, or a long-term relationship. *Don, POB 885, General Post Office, Brooklyn, NY 11202, or ph: 718 624 5029, or email: brooklyn@prodigy.net*

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ADIRONDACK REGION. GWM 39, 5'9", 150 lbs. br/br, clean-cut, phy. fit (as much as dis. allows), am told I'm attractive. I have several dis. Part. deaf, lost most use of left hand and wear a brace most of the time, have nerve degeneration going on with legs. Most days life is okay. I am presently single and live alone except for my two dogs at the gateway to the Adirondacks, 12 miles from the nearest town (Lowville, NY) on 14 acres of family owned land. I am trying to start a business of my own—campgrounds for the dis. and seniors. No money but have a vision. I enjoy gardening of all kinds, outdoor fun, hunting, fishing, camping, traveling occ., family, friends, and being part of my community. I live life to the fullest, always willing to try anything at least once. I like quiet times at home, going out occ. I drink occ. and smoke (trying to quit cigs). I am on SSD and live a very conservative life because of that. Prefer GM under 40 (but will write all). Race and dis. are not important. Please be willing to relocate to my area, enjoy some of the same things I do. Be open, honest, caring, understanding, patient, considerate and trustworthy. willing to share whatever life deals out, and be part of my vision in whatever way you can. Please write with photo. to Daniel. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1731.*

NEW YORK. GAM 25, 110#, bilateral amputee (b/k) who walks with a cane, seeks friendships, mutual support, and fun times. I love music, hot baths, and the arts. If you're into LIFE or just want to hang out, then please write. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1788 or voice-mail: 917 826 1710.*

NEW YORK. Hi! My name is Doug, a GWM 48, 5'11", 165-170 lbs, HIV-, with very slight cerebral palsy. I'm looking for a guy with or without a disability in age range 37-47. After work I'm into the performing arts, concerts, ballets, opera, lectures, and so on. I do not let my handicap keep me from doing the things I like or want to do but I want to meet the right guy to fill the other void in my life. Please be disease-free and a non-smoker. If you are interested send 'phone and photo to: *POB 275, Bronx, NY 10461.*

NORTH CAROLINA. Nice looking discreet 33 y/o interested in meeting disabled/nondisabled guys. 6' 175#, brown hair, green eyes, hairy chest and stomach. Fun loving, like most anything from quiet times, sports etc. Travel nationwide. Your photo and phone get mine but neither required. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1818 or Email: BryanLau@aol.com*

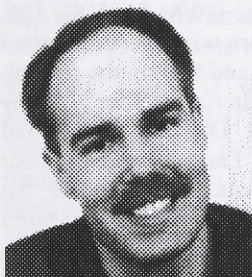
I LIVE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF NORTH CAROLINA. Nondisabled male, 62, 6'1", 220 lbs, gray hair, hazel eyes, hairy chest; I'm attracted to disabled men; I'm retired and travel a great deal, and would love to hear from you wherever you are. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #508.*

NORTH CAROLINA. GWM 33, blond hair, blue eyes, nondisabled, iso GWM 30—50 disabled, professional for friendship/rela-

tionship. Prefer chair user or lower extremity disability but open to all. Southerner who enjoys travel, going out or quiet times at home. Looking for a caring, honest, open man willing to explore life. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1601.*

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NORTH DAKOTA. Walt here, and I'm lost out on the Dakota prairie. I was born here in 1952 (do the math), but escaped in 1970 and went to college in L.A. and Seattle. Most of the 1970s were spent globetrotting with a gospel (sort of)/rock (very jazz) band. My MS surfaced while I was on the road in Europe back in 1973. After a year off, touring resumed until health said "no more." Following careers from graphics designer to public relations, I ended up back in ND. Although health keeps me fairly sedentary, politics and disability issues keep me active. I'm a freelance writer for various periodicals, and my book, "I've Fallen and I Still Can't Get Up," a commentary on disability, is due out this millenium. When occasionally not in the wheelchair, I stand at 5'9" and tip the scale at 160#. Currently, I sport



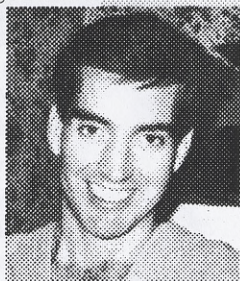
a salt and pepper, VERY sparse crew cut and a trimmed 'stache. Despite growing up in an evangelical-fundamentalist home, my spiritual journey has taken me elsewhere. Interests exclude dope, tobacco, too much booze, and "political correctness;" interests include politics, music from opera to Elton, intelligent conversation and meeting someone of like mind. If you connect with any of the above, let's communicate: *Replies with correct*

postage please to A-T #1295 or E-mail: wdudley@pop.ctctel.com

CLEVELAND, OHIO. GWM born 1941, 5'8", 140#, brown/blue; diagnosis—MS; currently attempting to get better control of the following symptoms: walking difficulty, bladder and sexual dysfunction; personal interests: history, especially of Cleveland/Northern Ohio & Great Lakes areas, movies, trains, transit, historic preservation, naturism, gay male erotica. I am back in my home town after a career elsewhere, on extended medical leave prior to retirement. Always willing to hear from A-T subscribers in NE Ohio or visitors to our area. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #617.*



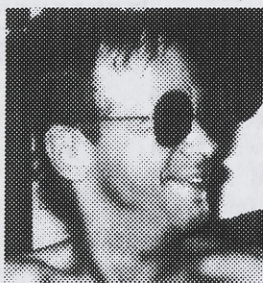
OHIO. GWM, 36, 6'2", 140#, C6-7 incomplete quadriplegic. I'm a nice, down-to-earth, professional man with simple interests; travel (planning trips to San Francisco and New Orleans this year), music (a wide range of preferences from Sinatra to the Pet Shop Boys), movies, cooking, sex, and quiet times at home. Affection and honesty are among the traits that I value in a man. I'm hoping to meet somebody around my age with similar interests for friendship, or possibly a long-term relationship. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1714, or e-mail: ghbey@juno.com*



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PENNSYLVANIA. GWM 37 years old with a swimmer's build, 5' 9", 125 lbs, with cerebral palsy. I am masculine and cute. I have my college degree in theatre. I already wrote a play and it was staged at Penn State University in the main campus. Believe me - I don't let my disability stand in my way of anything or anybody. I live on my own, one hour away from Philadelphia and one hour away from New York City. My interests are the theatre, working out at the gym, dancing, going to the beach in the summer, laying in the sun to get a dark tan without a tan line, partying, going to see male dancers, and traveling. Believe me, I do everything and anything. I am looking for someone to be with to enjoy life and to have a blast with. And... Hey, is there any guy out there who wants to take a vacation? Please contact me if you do. I was thinking about going to one of the islands, just lay out on the beach in our bikinis and look at the view. *Bill Lasch, 1101 Seneca Street #208, Bethlehem, PA 18015, ph: 610 866 4679.*

PENNSYLVANIA. Attractive, well-educated GWM 26, 5'8", 125, brown hair and eyes, neat and clean. I was born with spastic athetoid cerebral palsy which affects my speech, gait and fine motor control. I am ambulatory, but use a power wheelchair for distance. I enjoy computers, the Internet, AOL, travel, theater, Disability Issues and Rights, reading, meeting new people and sex. I am an active member of both ADAPT and the Philadelphia Rowing Program for the Disabled. Sexually, I am extremely open-minded, tend to prefer more of a submissive role, and have a strong interest in other men who have disabilities. Please feel free to write, call or email me. *Brian Peaceman, 150 N Bethlehem Pike #C-110, Ambler, PA 19002, ph: 215 540 0411 before 10pm EST, or email: BPeaceman@aol.com*



PENNSYLVANIA. GWM (8/5/55), sincere, warm, caring, intelligent, humorous, can be shy, Leo, others tell me I'm a handsome bear, dark hair, beard/'stache, blue eyes, hairy back-butt-legs, person with a disability, power wheelchair user, HIV-neg., the fixed-income thing. I seek friendships and possibly more, mutual support, hugs, kissing, safe times. I enjoy music, computers, surfing the Internet, E-mail, videos, houseplants, volunteering, hanging out on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania & at their botanical garden & bio-pond, and appreciating the great view from my secure 19th floor apartment.

I do not smoke and don't use drugs and have no interest in sports. *Clark WF, 3901 Market St. #1913, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3131, or email: clarkwf@ix.netcom.com or clarkwf@juno.com*

PENNSYLVANIA. Good guy, 39, 5'11", 165#, brown hair and eyes, good-looking, masculine, solid, nondisabled. Personable, casual, unconventional, active, affectionate. Enjoy music, the outdoors, movies, sports, exercise, good food, good conversation, good books, and good

times. Have positive, sincere, lifelong interest in men with disabilities, particularly upper extremity amputees and survivors of SCI, polio or spina bifida who use crutches. Maybe it's the athletic aspect of the upper body, my thoughts on intimacy and disability, discovering him whom others may overlook...Now I am embracing this interest and seeing where it leads me: I'm more than happy to explore and explain with the right guy. I hope to offer a high degree of awareness, knowledge and sensitivity to a disabled man to see what we can enjoy or build together. Have dated a few men with disabilities and all was ok. If you like what you hear and the above seems to fit, please be in touch. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1428 or ph: 215 829 9650.*

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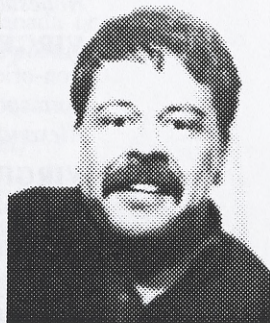
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TENNESSEE. GWM 43, 6'2", 140 lbs, likes to read, write, clock-repair, wood-carving, plants, also love great old movies and chess, and good conversations about trivial facts, inactive lawyer on SSI after complete knee replacement, consider self nondisabled, drinking problem (want to be honest)—iso wheelchair using men for friendship and possibly more. Write and send a picture. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #952.*

TEXAS. GWM 51, brown/hazel, 5'0", 131 lbs, HIV-neg., smoke, alcohol & drug free (12 yrs. recovery), seeking friendship, cuddling, safe sex, giggles, & perhaps love; but no wedding rings. I'm not into penpals or telephone friendships. From old polio I have scoliosis (spine curves to right), a hump on right side of back and an underdeveloped left shoulder—also slight, seasonal asthma. I'm handsome, mischievously sexual, and fit. I question authority—my own, as well as others'—and I'm playfully irreverent. I'm a community college professor, professionally secure and financially comfortable. I love music: R&R, big band & classical (baroque to 20th c), astrology (student for 20+ years), *X-Files*, *Cops*, *America's Most Wanted*, antiques, bookstores, conversation, low fat dining, light exercise, Monopoly, Scrabble and old b&w movies. Please be: able to travel (as I am) should we decide to meet. Also be: DD and smoke free, sensitive, fun, fit within your ability, willing to try things you haven't, possibly a polio survivor and/or an amputee, or even physically normal. Photo gets mine. *Billy Roberts, ph: 512 385 8313, or replies with correct postage please to A-T #956.*



TEXAS. Half Polynesian Gay Male, black hair, brown eyes, 03/20/52, 180 lbs., 5' 10 1/2", alcohol/drug free. Bipolar Disorder. Animal lover—I have two cats. I like cross-bike riding, computers and True Crime Stories. I'm a Nudist. I have pen-pals in different countries. I'm shy at first, but have a quirky (or kinky) sense of humor. Like to exchange photos. *D. Andrew Kiger, 8205—B Guadalupe Street, Austin, TX 78753, or ph: 512 833 6104, or visit <http://homepage.USR.com/d/danaandrews> or e-mail: DANAKIGER@juno.com*



TEXAS. Clean cut, GWM, 40s, 5'10", 165, able bodied, very interested in meeting new friends. I often find myself attracted to guys with physical disabilities. I travel a great deal (especially So. California and major cities), so location isn't as important as a sharing of mutual interests. I enjoy the performing and fine arts, classical music, architectural history, good food/wine with an interesting guy. My favorite countries to visit are France and Italy, but am open to new experiences. Let's have dinner (please be a non-smoker), explore our interests and perhaps plan an adventure! I look forward to hearing from you soon. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1420.*

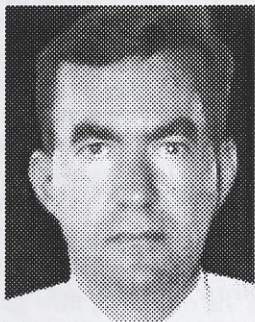
TEXAS. Bisexual white man, date of birth April 1942, brown gray hair, hazel eyes, returned to USA after living over seven years in Germany, 5' 8", 179 lbs, HIV-neg. I have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from the Vietnam War and my childhood child abuse, followed by persistent personality change and Sleep Disorder. I want what is hard to find: an emotional and sexual relationship with only one bi man and only one bi woman. Full knowledge and consent of all. First get to know each other in friendship and then let it happen. Help, please send me information on how to contact a group/organization for making contact with bi men and bi women. I have not found anything in this small cow town. Please write to: J.C., 2500 Nonesuch Road #7D, Abilene, TX 79606-1512.

VIRGINIA. GWM, nondisabled 47 y/o professional, communication-oriented, 5' 11" tall, 190#, HIV-neg., would like to meet and/or correspond with man who is an amputee. *Michael Allen, POB 19435, Alexandria, VA 22320.*

VIRGINIA. I am a 53 year old disabled person, in a wheelchair, but not confined to it, due to diabetic neuropathy. All toes on both feet have been amputated. Had CVA in August—health now improving since I have become a vegetarian. My interests are Art—I paint; History—ancient to European renaissance; Music—any kind other than Jazz and Hard Rock. I am 6'2", dirty blond/hazel, clean shaven, and my weight fluctuates between 250# and 300#. I like to hug and hold and give excellent full body massages. I am an avid movie buff and love animals. I am looking for a large, hairy, gentle giant type to visit me and look forward to an LTR. I love Europeans and am a confirmed Francophile. Canadian and Swiss also a definite plus, as is lumberjack type. *Replies with correct postage please to A-T #1543, or ph: 540-342 5859 between 9am and 11pm Eastern time.*

HOMEBASE SEATTLE, WA. I know there is a great guy out there looking for someone he can spend quality time with! I'm truly interested in connecting with someone who is good to himself and those that he holds dear. I have been in long term relations with both a primary partner and long term friendships. I am a GWM 41, 175 lbs, 6'2", light brown hair, blue/green eyes and have muscular dystrophy. I have worked in the PC/networking fields for the last 20+ years and

now plan to travel throughout North America, Australia and Europe. I am interested in meeting new friends worldwide. I now work as a Webmaster for a traveler resource called **AbleTraveler.com** just getting off the ground. I am also interested in writing a book that focuses on disabled men: coming out stories, insights, successful relationships, &c. My preference in a mate is someone with a good sense of humor. It doesn't matter to me if you have a disability, small stature, small



cock, or if you work or don't work. It's more important of me that you are happy with your life and what you contribute to the greater good. I use an electric wheelchair to get around. I love travel, theater, dining out or at home, or a concert. Give me a call, I would love to hear from you.
Dan Pierce, MSC 6756, POB 2428, Pensacola, FL 32513-2428, or ph: 206 619 1365 or e-mail: abletraveler@abac.com

Why not send A-T a photo to be published with your ad?

CANADA/NORTHWESTERN US. BRITISH COLUMBIA: 29 yr-old bi black male with mild Cerebral Palsy seeks other 30 & under. bi/gay pen-pals with a disability. Preferably in Canada or Pacific Northwestern U.S. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1800.*

Why not send A-T a photo to be published with your ad?

LONDON. Hi I'm Ben, I am 23 years old living in London. I'm 4'4", medium build with blond hair and brown eyes. I walk with a pair of sticks but I manage very well. I love going out to clubs, pubs, cinema—and love lots of nights in with the right company if you know what I mean!! I'm looking for a man—age from 26-40, not fussy, just looking for mister right. .So if you think you would love to meet me, get in touch let's see what will happen. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1812 or E-mail: ben@sir-lyons.demon.co.uk*

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND. Hi, I'm Bill Naismith. I am young at heart: here is my photo—see for yourself! I'm 5'8", medium build, with short black hair and a 'tache. I had polio and walk with a pair of sticks. I'm looking to connect with butch males of any age. Happy to accommodate visitors at my home. Go on, drop me a line. *Bill Naismith, POB 42, Newton Le Willow, Warrington, WA3 2DA, UK, or ph: [UK]-0850 491 131*



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OXFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND. Friendly, intelligent, attractive nondisabled guy, 50ish but look much younger, iso disabled guys as penpals and friends. I like exchanging ideas and feelings, like kisses, cuddles and massage, want to make you happy. Do write. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1592.*

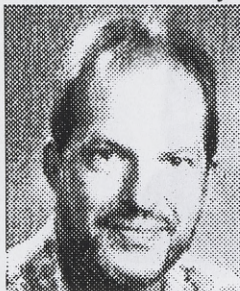
SOMERSET, ENGLAND. GWM 37, 5'11", 130 lbs, straight-acting nonsmoker, low level spinal cord injury, wheelchair user, brown hair, hazel eyes, clean shaven. I wear hearing aids. Interests: wanting to live life to the full again. I live and breathe the countryside; I enjoy handcycling down country lanes, swimming, driving my car, visiting places of interest, reading, music, writing, computer, cinema. I just started my first job since my accident helping improve wheelchair public transport for the disabled and elderly. I have lost lots of friends since my accident, thus I need to find new ones that will accept and understand the way my disability affects me. Would like to hear from other people, disabled and nondisabled, pen pals and maybe more. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1594.*

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND. Good looking, fit, active wheelchair-user, 28, looking to explore and have physical fun with other sexy looking wheelchair bound guys, hobbies include cycling, weight-training, countryside, cinema, enjoying life. 14 Abbey Lane, Edinburgh, EH8 8HH, UK or ph: [UK] - [0]131 468 0490

PERTH, SCOTLAND. My name is Peter, I'm 43, heavy build, brown hair and clean shaven. Disability due to SCI last year. I'm mobile with walking sticks and my car helps too. My interests are varied and include reading, music, films. I'm looking for guys, disabled or able-bodied, for friendship and perhaps, with the right person, possibly more. I look forward to hearing from you. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1774, or email: barking91@hotmail.com*

Why not send A-T a photo to be published with your ad?

DENMARK. 45 y/o guy, 187 cm., 81 kg., br eyes, darkblond hair (soon gray!), short beard, former bookkeeper, parttime wheelchairuser (incomplete quadriplegia), still looking for Mr. one and only. I like traveling, gardening, theater, different kind of music, reading, being with people I care for. I retired from work two years ago. I broke my neck 13 years ago, and now I just work with things that interests me: I'm a volunteer in the Danish Paraplegian Association, working a lot with accessibility, as teacher for social workers, and with many other things. You are 40 to 60 years old, disabled or nondisabled, topguy, interested in some of the same things as I, have a good sense of humor and you are looking for a long term relationship. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1823.*



MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. Richard, 43 yo architect. I have Spinal Muscular Atrophy (Kugelberg and Welanders Syndrome) and would particularly like to correspond with other guys with this or similar neuro-muscular conditions—though anyone else is also welcome to write. I am still ambulant for most of the time, though becoming increasingly reliant on my wheelchair (manual, ultra light) for shopping and “long-haul” activities. My interests include theatre, opera, classical music (particularly choral—I sing!) and computers. I still socialize a bit on the gay scene here, though I often find access and standing around quite difficult. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1665 or E-mail: richpond@bigpond.com*

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. Harold, a 48 y.o. Wheelchair user (SCI). 5'6" Well-built. Good-looking, affectionate and sexy. Professional background. I am very independent. Enjoy travelling, scuba diving, movies, dinners out. I drive. Would enjoy corresponding with guys who are disabled/nondisabled who share similar values with a view to friendship. Cheers & I hope to hear from you soon. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1305, or email: harold@connexus.net.au*

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. Hi. I'm a 23 yo physically disabled university graduate, currently completing an honours year in the field of sexuality and disability. I would like to make contact with guys for correspondence, friendship and whatever unfolds. I use a motorised wheelchair and have very weak limbs that prevent me from walking or moving my body without assistance. I'm slim and have short dark hair, brown eyes and a cheeky smile! Although I am severely paralysed, I have full bodily sensation and there's one part of me that isn't paralysed (have a guess!). I'm into having good-times and a lot of laughs and am looking for someone who shares my sense of fun and positive outlook. I would like to hear from fun, open-minded and sensitive guys from anywhere. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1819.*

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA. Hi guys!! This is a new kid on the Australian block, who I am disabled. But I have a good lifestyle that I live alone. Happy as a single gay person. Speaking with my disabilities, mind you, which I have two, these are: Moderate-severe Athetoid Cerebral Palsy and profoundly hearing loss, these affected since I was born with. Now I'm 20 years old, healthy (non-smoker, non-drinker and drug-free), honest, clean-shaven, 170cm (about) 65kgs, blond hair and brown eyes, who also have a slim body. I am living in a quiet area in Sydney's West. I am a college (TAFE) student, studying Information Technology Certificate IV (Multimedia). I can walk, however only limited distance. Communicate to you that I am using my hearing aids. What sort of guy you like? you may ask me. Well—I don't judge about age range and appearances. It is

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important to judge what is a man's personality. Able-bodied or disabled guys is fine with me. Hobbies and interests? Love nature, reading, quiet nights, enjoying bushwalking, photography, landscapes, computers and new things in life. Love to hear from you anywhere in the world. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1725, or email: marchibald@one.net.au*

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA. Steve, 37 years old, attractive Mediterranean with swimmer's physique: seeking DAK amputee male or any other amputee male to meet and explore relationship possibilities. *Steve Henkelman, 3D/164 Burwood Road, Concord, NSW 2137, Australia, or email: psychotracker@one.net.au*

Why not send A-T a photo to be published with your ad?

BRAZIL. It is raining today in Rio de Janeiro. Just the excuse I needed to sit down and write this personal ad. When the sun is shining the city is almost irresistible. What with beaches, mountains, the rain forest, it is a bit of a waste to stay at home. Even though I confess I got myself one of those wide screen tvs, for I enjoy watching a good movie or a silly sitcom. I make it a point to go jogging daily on the shore and to swim practise four times a week. I consider that quite a privilege. I would really enjoy hearing from you. I travel to the US every year, but would also have a great time showing you around Rio. I am nondisabled but enjoy the company of disabled men, who I think are much more than men. Please be masculine (as I am) and born after 1960 preferably...Some more about me: 6ft tall, about 180 lbs, good shape, don't smoke, no drugs, a healthy life-enjoying white guy. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1219, or E-mail: Debevic@uol.com.br*

TAHITI. I am 29 yo, Tahitian and French nationality, 1.74m tall and 67.5kg weight, serious, sentimental and fed up with losing time without having sex! I'm goodlooking, spinal cord injured and looking for other young goodlooking men, disabled or nondisabled for having chat, share, sex, love and more. *Replies with correct international postage please to A-T #1822.*

SMILE, PLEASE!

When submitting your ad, we encourage you to send a photo of yourself to be printed with it. Remember, though: Our printing budget does not permit reproduction of the highest quality, so if your photo is poor quality to begin with, you're liable to be disappointed with what you see. Oh, and one more thing: *Smile!* It really helps.

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James Fulton, 1517B Missouri, Houston, TX 77006
phone: 713 523 1332 or email: james_e@iah.com

The Center for Disability Rights in Rochester, New York has begun monthly meetings of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered persons with disabilities. The Center is located at **41 Backus Street, Rochester, NY 14608**. The group will get together from **5:00 PM—8:00 PM every third Wednesday of the month**. Call **Bruce Darling** or **Susan Stahl** on **716 647-9257**

ABLE-TOGETHER *Magazine*

is in its **sixth year** of publication. A-T is mailed to subscribers across the globe in January, April, July, and October and is sold at gay/progressive bookstores.

Editor **Bob Guter**, an amputee since age six, examines the impact of disability on men's lives and relationships.

A-T Magazine is its subscribers—who contribute letters, poems, opinions, artwork, articles and bulletin-board items to the magazine, and help with outreach locally.

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